



National Library  
of Canada

Acquisitions and  
Bibliographic Services Branch

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale  
du Canada

Direction des acquisitions et  
des services bibliographiques

395 rue Wellington  
Ottawa (Ontario)  
K1A 0N4

*Your best - Votre référence*

*Quality - Qualité de référence*

## NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

## AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

Canada

**Pioneers: Gender and Occupation in Barbados**

**Phyllis P. Browne**

**A Thesis**

**in**

**The Special**

**Individualized Programme**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at  
Concordia University  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

**August, 1994**

**© Phyllis P. Browne, 1994**



National Library  
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale  
du Canada

Acquisitions and  
Bibliographic Services Branch

Direction des acquisitions et  
des services bibliographiques

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0N4

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa (Ontario)  
K1A 0N4

*Your file    Votre référence*

*Our file    Notre référence*

THE AUTHOR HAS GRANTED AN  
IRREVOCABLE NON-EXCLUSIVE  
LICENCE ALLOWING THE NATIONAL  
LIBRARY OF CANADA TO  
REPRODUCE, LOAN, DISTRIBUTE OR  
SELL COPIES OF HIS/HER THESIS BY  
ANY MEANS AND IN ANY FORM OR  
FORMAT, MAKING THIS THESIS  
AVAILABLE TO INTERESTED  
PERSONS.

L'AUTEUR A ACCORDE UNE LICENCE  
IRREVOCABLE ET NON EXCLUSIVE  
PERMETTANT A LA BIBLIOTHEQUE  
NATIONALE DU CANADA DE  
REPRODUIRE, PRETER, DISTRIBUER  
OU VENDRE DES COPIES DE SA  
THESE DE QUELQUE MANIERE ET  
SOUS QUELQUE FORME QUE CE SOIT  
POUR METTRE DES EXEMPLAIRES DE  
CETTE THESE A LA DISPOSITION DES  
PERSONNE INTERESSEES.

THE AUTHOR RETAINS OWNERSHIP  
OF THE COPYRIGHT IN HIS/HER  
THESIS. NEITHER THE THESIS NOR  
SUBSTANTIAL EXTRACTS FROM IT  
MAY BE PRINTED OR OTHERWISE  
REPRODUCED WITHOUT HIS/HER  
PERMISSION.

L'AUTEUR CONSERVE LA PROPRIETE  
DU DROIT D'AUTEUR QUI PROTEGE  
SA THESE NI LA THESE NI DES  
EXTRAITS SUBSTANTIELS DE CELLE-  
CI NE DOIVENT ETRE IMPRIMES OU  
AUTREMENT REPRODUITS SANS SON  
AUTORISATION.

ISBN 0-612-01270-0

Canada

**ABSTRACT**  
**Pioneers: Gender and Occupation in Barbados**

Phyllis P. Browne, Ph.D.  
Concordia University, 1994

The study examines women's participation in six major professions in Barbados by investigating factors such as career aspirations, job satisfaction, upward mobility, incomes, family life, the feminization of jobs, and sex discrimination. For the past two or so decades, women have played a more active role in the labour market particularly at the professional level initiated primarily by their higher levels of educational attainment and their participation in a broader range of fields of study. Their participation has had serious implications for men who have been characterized as withdrawing from the challenge and opting out -- symptoms traced back to recently implemented coeducational reforms. At university, females at the undergraduate level outnumber males by far, and are awarded higher achievements for their work.

This new phenomenon of women in the professions has created other problems for women themselves. In the six professions examined there has been serious concern of sexual harassment, and male hostilities which go far beyond sex discrimination and male strategies aimed at deterring women from entering or remaining in traditionally male oriented professions. Women develop strategies of their own with which to cope in their new milieu. Often faced with having to make serious decisions in terms of marriage and family life, they have to decide whether to postpone marriage or children or both; put their career on hold to raise a family; or whether to merge the two jobs of career and family. Whatever the choice, it has high costs for women. Some forfeit having children, by advancing their professional development, while those who merge the two complain of an acute struggle and persistent fatigue from having to carry the double load. Professionally, those with families often impose their own self-styled ceiling that limits their career ambitions but which facilitates the merging of career and family.



## Resumé

### Le Genre et le travail dans la Barbade: Les Pionières

Phyllis P. Browne, Ph.D.  
Concordia University, 1994

L'étude examine la participation des femmes dans six professions majeures dans la Barbade. Cela a été fait en investigant des facteurs tels que les aspirations professionnelles, la satisfaction au travail, les possibilités d'avancement, les revenus, la vie familiale, la féminization des emplois et la discrimination sexuelle. Pendant les vingt dernières années les femmes ont joué un rôle de plus en plus important sur la scène du travail, et particulièrement au niveau professionnel. La cause en est principalement niveau d'éducation supérieur et une plus grande diversité des matières étudiées. La participation croissante des femmes a eu les implications sérieuses pour les hommes qui n'ont généralement pas relevé le défi et ont abandonné -- des symptômes qui sont aperçus depuis les réformes coéducationnelles récemment implementées. A l'université les femmes surpassent les hommes en nombre et en performance académique.

Le nouveau phénomène des femmes dans les professions a aussi créé des problèmes pour les femmes. Dans toutes les six professions examinées il y a eu de l'harcèlement sexuel, de l'hostilité masculine qui va bien au-delà de l'harcèlement, et les stratégies masculines pour défendre l'accès ou pour chasser les femmes des milieux traditionnellement dominés par les mâles. Les femmes se défendent en autant que possible en créant leur propres stratégies. Mais elles sont souvent contraintes à faire des choix sérieux entre carrière et vie familiale. Retarder la venue des enfants ou du mariage ou les deux ou bien choisir le mariage ou la carrière, ou essayer de balancer les deux, peu importe la solution elles en paient toutes le prix.

Il y a des femmes qui n'ont pas d'enfants du tout, pendant que celles qui essaient de balancer la carrière et la famille se plaignent du stress et de la fatigue persistente qui en résulte. Professionnellement il y a des femmes qui doivent s'imposer des limites dans leurs carrières pour pouvoir bien les balancer avec la famille, et cela semble fonctionner.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to express my thanks to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for its financial contribution towards this project.

My special thanks go to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Anthony Synnott, of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Concordia University, and the members of my supervising committee, Dr. Ratna Ghosh of Administration and Policy Studies in Education, McGill University, and Dr. Joseph Smucker of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Concordia University. It is a team that has given me encouragement and support from the inception of the idea of pursuing the study, and remained confident in my ability throughout, and I owe them my gratitude. Sincere thanks must go to Dr. Bob Kavanagh of the Office of Graduate Studies, Concordia University for his overwhelming confidence in me. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Thomas Eisemon, of the World Bank for his unfailing support. Sincere thanks also go to Drs. Margaret Gillett and Nancy Jackson of the Department of Administration and Policy Studies in Education, McGill University and Dr. Rosalind Zinman, for their support.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the large number of people in Barbados who really made this study possible. I owe special thanks to the administrative officers in the ministries of labour and trade, education, health, legal affairs, and the civil service, Barbados Statistical Services, the Bank of Nova Scotia, Barbados National Bank, Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners, Barbados Bar Association, Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies, for their generous

assistance during my field work. I would also like to thank those people who so willingly took time out of their busy schedules to give the interview. It is impossible to name them all here, but they are the lawyers, doctors, university teachers, politicians, the civil servants, persons in the commercial sector, all of whom saw the need for this study and contributed greatly. I would also like to thank all those persons from the same sectors who tried so desperately to give an interview but were unable to because of time conflicts. Special thanks also to Roger Côté and his staff, particularly Jackie, Phung, Kathy and Christina, of the Financial Aid Department of Concordia University. Much appreciation to Mrs. Krishtalka of Vanier College Library.

Moral support played an important role in completing this study and for that I owe deep appreciation to Sara (for her nagging insistence that I finish and for allowing me to brainstorm with her), Aileen, Annabelle, Cindy, Diane, Josette, Kandis, Clyde, Duffie, as well as Charlie Broomes and John Dobbek of Engineering Headquarters of the CBC. Deepest appreciation also to my sisters and brothers and their families for their support and constant encouragement, and my sons Russell and Rodney who shared tirelessly in this experience. Special thanks to my computer emergency person and friend, Levi, of Bluetron Micro Systems, who responded to my frequent emergency calls with fine style and without a fuss, every time, thank you.

I would like to dedicate Chapter 7 of this study to the memory of the late Dr. Esther Archer, who, from her humble beginnings, clearly demonstrated that success has more to do with ability and determination than with gender or economics.

Finally, my gratitude is extended to all those who may have assisted me in any way but were not mentioned here.

## **Table of Contents**

List of Tables.....	viii
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2 Gender and Occupation.....	27
Chapter 3 Methodology.....	55
Chapter 4 The Commercial Sector.....	64
Chapter 5 The Civil Service.....	114
Chapter 6 University Teaching.....	167
Chapter 7 The Medical Profession.....	212
Chapter 8 The Legal Profession.....	271
Chapter 9 The Political Profession.....	329
Chapter 10 Summary and Conclusions.....	380
Bibliography.....	401
Appendix 1 Research Questions.....	411

## List of Tables

Table 1	Distribution of Males & Females in Labour Force 1970 & 1980 in Barbados	49
Table 2	Distribution of Males & Females in Industrial Occupations in Barbados	50
Table 3	Staff Distribution at Government Agency by Sex, by Status	123
Table 4	Registration for Higher Degrees by Faculty, by Sex, Cave Hill Campus, UWI, 1990/91	155
Table 5	Registration for Diplomas & Certificates by Faculty by Sex, Cave Hill Campus, UWI, 1990/91,	156
Table 6	Academic Enrolment for Selected Years by Faculty, by Sex	171
Table 7	First Degrees Awarded by Faculty, by Sex	172
Table 8	Structure of Teaching System by Status, by Faculty by Sex, Cave Hill Campus, UWI, 1991/92	186
Table 9	Campus Administration Structure, by Status, by Sex Cave Hill Campus, 1990/91	191
Table 10	Registered Medical Practitioners in Barbados, 1992	215
Table 11	Distribution of Doctors Employed by Government of Barbados at Medical institutions, by Institution, by Sex	216
Table 12	The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Annual Recruitment Levels of Doctors, by year, by Sex, 1987-1991	217
Table 13	The Queen Elizabeth Hospital - Allocation of Doctors by Level, by Sex, for the 2nd Quarter April 1 - June 30/92	233
Table 14	Queen Elizabeth Hospital Distribution of Doctors by Discipline, by Sex. 1992	234
Table 15	Number of Lawyers in Barbados, by Sex, 1993	272

Table 16	Distribution of Lawyers by Activity, by Sex, 1993	273
Table 17	Distribution of Court Officers by Title, by Sex, 1993	277
Table 18	Distribution of Lawyers in the Ministry of Legal Affairs by Location, by Sex, 1993	303
Table 19	Number of Candidates by Sex, Female percentage of votes by Party and number elected 1951 - 1991	333
Table 20	Average Share of Party Votes by Party, by Sex, for 1951, 1971, 1991	335
Table 21	Voting Patterns of Women by No. Registered, by No. Voting, by Female Share of Votes Cast, for Selected Years	335

# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

Like many other developing societies as well as some industrialized ones, Barbados has experienced a dramatic change in social and economic conditions since the 1960s. This was a unique time for these societies, for in a number of cases, the whole social system has been reconstructed, frequently at the insistence of various popular movements, the best well-known in North America (and perhaps the most effective), being the Civil Rights Movement led by the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.. It was the momentum generated by this movement that brought the concerns of other groups onto the public platform. The Women's Movement, which gained much of its recognition during the late 1960s and onwards, became the universal umbrella for women's groups worldwide which had as their focus, the promotion of gender equality in society.

Women in the private sector in Barbados started to enjoy some equity with men in the workplace through the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which was adopted in 1979 and implemented in 1981. Their situation was also improved through the United Nations Declaration of the International Decade of Women (1975-1985). But the process was still a slow one. In the public sector, the Government of Barbados had already started to implement social and economic change. Women specifically benefitted from government initiating equity in wages and equality of educational opportunity and occupational opportunity. This was a

consequence of, and consistent with, larger national policies (economic restructuring 1959, educational reform in 1962, and independence 1966), and opened up opportunities to women from which they were excluded for centuries.

Human rights issues are perhaps characterized as a global phenomenon but women in Barbados and indeed elsewhere indicate that their experiences in these new work environments and new professions differ significantly from the way men experience them. Family life and personal values are variables associated with the differential experience that women articulated as well as the patriarchal structure within which they must function, and in which they often feel marginalized. This not only limits their upward mobility but they feel entrapped in professions in which they are restricted by glass ceilings, glass walls, and male values.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate gender differences in the experiences of women and men in six major professions in Barbados: law, medicine, university teaching, commerce, the civil service, and politics. The primary reasons for this investigation are to research the ways in which women are integrated in the labour market, and to explore how they function in professions that have historically been occupied by men exclusively. Do women and men function differently? Do they bring different values to their work? Does the historical structure of these professions work to hinder or facilitate full participation and enjoyment by women who now play a vital role in these areas of work.



A brief outline provides background information on social and economic change as it relates to the concomitant labour force changes that occurred, and the significance of these changes for women and men. Specifically, it will examine the responses of women to these changes. For example, the feminization of clerical work will be explored, as well as the attempt women are making to redefine the jobs that they do, i.e. moving out of the traditional female jobs and into traditionally perceived male jobs. Finally, the study examines changes in the professions to determine whether the educational opportunities implemented over three decades earlier, are enough to eliminate gender inequality in the workplace, and whether the structure of the labour market is being revised to recognize the double load of raising a family and pursuing a career.

### **Significance of the Study**

Considerable research has been conducted in Canada, the U.S.A., and Britain on gender and occupational distribution, ghettoization, discrimination, job segregation, to mention a few. But little research has been conducted in developing countries. My research will be one of the first to clarify the dynamics of gender and occupational change in a developing country: historically, statistically, and humanistically (qualitatively). The study addresses the changing role of women in Barbados and the impact that change is having on the labour market. It is not sufficient to say that the role of women has changed in view of the fact that more women are participating in the labour market. Women in Barbados have played a role in the labour market for generations both formally and informally, but what is significant about their changing

role is that it has impacted on the role of men in ways it never did before. This impact is felt in the professional labour market where women are moving in rapidly and are creating a change not only to the image of those male bastions, but to the very structure of the entire labour force.

### **Background to the Problem**

This study is set in an historical time frame from the 1960s to the present but in order for the reader to fully grasp the significance of that period and its accompanying changes, it is an absolute necessity to expose the reader first to the situation of women and men immediately prior to that historical time frame. To do this, an earlier background to the role of women in Barbados is presented only because it might have helped to shape the present perception men have of women in Barbadian society today.

Barbados has been a slave society for most of its historical past beginning in the late 1620s. The plantation economy which the white imperialists established, created a work environment, in which gender and work relationships projected the concept of gender equality as Beckles (1989) states:

"As field hands in Barbados, black women were subjected to the same exhausting productive employment as men.... and the concept of women as the 'gentle sex' was not part of the trading culture... it had long been the custom with planters 'to work all the Negroes together indiscriminately, as the women with men and the weak with the strong. It has been stated that this pattern of labour organization expressed principles of an enlightened equalitarianism, but it also suggests the greater exploitation of female labour on the plantations.'" (Beckles. 1989: 24)

Such a situation prevailed until the plantation owners came to grips with the fact that

women's participation in such strenuous activities, even when they were pregnant, became a threat to the reproduction of their work force, and this subsequently led to a sexual division of labour along gender lines for these women (Beckles, 1989). In the United States of America where enslavement of blacks was also practised, Hooks (1992: 88) characterizes these early work relationships differently indicating that "sex-based differentiation of work roles as assigned by white masters reflected a bias towards the male" and substantiates her argument with the fact that black women had to perform "male" tasks while black men did not perform "female" tasks. She gives the example that while women worked in the fields, men did not perform childcare tasks. This is merely an introduction to the historical situation of women in Barbados and perhaps a closer link to understanding the position they have inherited from the slave economy. The situation of women in Barbadian society has always been one of hard work and dedication to their family.

In the pre-World War II years, Barbados reflected a society of persistent poverty among the blacks after the Abolition of Slavery in 1838, which only became a reality in Barbados one hundred years later. It was a polarized country along class lines reflecting the haves and the have-nots (the whites and the blacks). Black women at the time were actively reproductive, which on the one hand helped to perpetuate their disadvantaged position, and on the other, it summoned up in them important qualities and strengths that perhaps would only have been manifested under such conditions. The slave system from which they had emerged with the males, had denied them the legal right to marriage and this perhaps may have explained the attitude of black men towards their women and the

children that they fathered. Black women therefore became the main heads of households even in situations where the men were present for it was the women who maintained the family.

Work in the paid labour force was limited and often restricted to whites except for the more menial types of work. To survive and maintain their children, women became self-sufficient by living off the land, and quickly developed entrepreneurial skills, marketing the excess produce in the neighbourhood and in the public markets; they also baked bread and cakes and candies and sold them from their homes; they marketed their domestic labour power; they sewed clothing for their family, and marketed that service to others in the community as well. They often reinvested the income generated, sometimes selling commercialized products from their homes.

This points to the level of responsibility women took for their family in the absence of a guaranteed income and often in the absence of a spouse, common law or married. Men were often dependent on women for their keep as the women were the major income earners (and sometimes the only income earners) for a long time. Even when the economic situation started to change and men acquired employment opportunities, women continued their entrepreneurial trade because the wages that men brought home (or the contribution that men made) was still insufficient to maintain the home, neither was it guaranteed. So women played a very vital role in the home and in the economy as well. What remained a disadvantage for them, was the fact that their role in those critical times went unrecognized as much as it still does today.

By the mid-1960s when access to higher levels of education became more

widespread, the labour force had already been more receptive to women's participation as a larger number of females were becoming more qualified, many of whom were focusing on the non-traditional areas of work. Law and medicine became very attractive to young females, while others sought careers in the commercial and public sectors. Although these four sectors were previously dominated by men, the availability of free university education facilitated women's access. University teaching and politics either did not seem attractive to women, or were more difficult to penetrate. However, university teaching seems the more receptive as women's failure in penetrating the political arena during the past fifty or so years, has left them with claim to no more than one seat at a time in the House of Assembly.

The impact of restructuring in the professions is evident in the female percentage of university enrolment. Statistics for the academic years 1983/84 through 1992/93 indicate that women outnumbered men in every faculty (with the exception of natural sciences and medical sciences), every year. Even in these faculties there has been an increasing enrolment of women over the same period, for the most part. During this 10-year period, the law faculty was dominated by women every academic year, although female enrolment recorded a slight dip in two academic years. All other years showed an increase. The areas of natural sciences and medical sciences indicate an increase of women as well. In natural sciences, with the exception of 1987/88 and 1989/90, female enrolment was up. In the medical sciences where men still dominate the profession, women's enrolment over the eight-year period (from 1985/86 - 1992/93), was 37.8% of total enrolment.

The increase of women in the major professions has raised many concerns. For example, boys are perceived not to be doing as well as girls in high school, a situation which has been blamed on the promotion of a full co-educational system. But a co-ed system was practised in the private school system for a long time and such a problem did not seem to surface. Opponents of the co-ed systems contend that boys find it difficult to compete with the girls, who apply themselves to their school work in a more serious manner.

At the adult level, Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (BIMAP) is one of the most popular institutes for management training, and again, women outnumber the men in classrooms, by far. But this is the way the pattern has evolved. Initially, the institute catered to the needs of executives and middle management personnel most of whom were men. But most of the students today, are either women already in management, or those with aspirations to do so. And they win the prizes for excellence in performance as well. It is within this context where change is so evident, and the labour market being reshaped to reflect the increasing participatory rate of women, that the study has been conducted.

## **Historical**

The Women's Movement has moved women to various dimensions in social and economic development. Universally, women have gained some recognition through the efforts of the Women's Movement; whether it be national or international recognition, women as a population, now have improved status in society. In Britain and North

America this process gained momentum as a result of the two world wars, when women were called upon to fill the labour shortage brought on by the absence of those men who had gone off to war. Appearing to be the prime motivation for women to become part of the production process, it clearly showed that they had the capacity to run the economy efficiently. In other words, it changed women's consciousness and perhaps gave them a new perception of themselves and their role in society.

The Civil Rights Movement in the United States in the 1960s became the political movement that women needed to advance their cause to a new dimension. Although this movement focused on racial discrimination and the disadvantaged position of blacks in the U.S.A., to a large extent, it received the support of many other political groups, most of whom sought to use the movement as a platform for their concerns. These two historical epochs, the two World Wars, and the Civil Rights Movement, had a catalytic impact on gender relations in the home and in the production process, and suggest that women's cause is best sustained and perhaps given serious consideration when it is advanced in conjunction with a larger and more threatening political movement.

The situation of women in Barbados today grew out of similar regional political developments propelled by the 1937 riots, which were a direct reaction to the social and economic disadvantages of the majority black population polarized with the social, economic, and political advantaged position of the white minority population. The riots did not propel women as a population in any specific or meaningful way, but they provided the framework which would be utilized at a later historical juncture, to pursue women's rights. Subsequent to the riots, the Barbados Labour Party, in its infancy at the

time, became fully involved in the wider political and social landscape of the country by winning the general election in 1948. and had as its pivotal point, the Barbados Workers' Union. This inevitably posed a disconcerting threat to the corporate power of Barbados as the new political party had the full support of the organized workers.

By the time the Federation of the West Indies had been established in 1958, the political climate in Barbados had been undergoing some uncertainty which had led to the birth of the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) from within the ranks of the Barbados Labour Party (Wallace, 1977). Established in 1955 and headed by the Late Errol Walton Barrow, the party, projecting a left wing socialist ideology, vowed to improve the social and economic conditions of the majority black working class. By the late 1950s, economic emphasis was shifting from agriculture (the mainstay of the economy for over 300 years), to industry and tourism. One serious implication of this shift was the need for a workforce to be developed and trained to cope with the demands of a new economy, giving rise to radical educational reform which commenced in the early 1960s.

The election of the democratic Labour Party in 1961 became the watershed for social and economic development in general and an improved standard of living of the masses in particular. By 1963, free secondary and university education had been made available to all with the abolition of tuition fees in secondary schools in 1962, and the establishment of the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies in Barbados in 1963 (known at the time as the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of the West Indies), giving the population relatively easy access to university training (Browne, 1986). In 1966, the country sought and obtained its independence from Britain under



whom it had remained a colony from 1627. Independent status paved the way for self-determination and created a new social context for women and men to become full participants.

It was from around this period (the mid-1960s) that women started to emerge in the professional class. The first female television broadcaster came on the scene, female lawyers and doctors were becoming noticeable, and women were becoming insurance sales representatives for the first time. To cope with the demands of a society in transition, and the changing status of women, business schools and management training centres were springing up everywhere along with the Barbados Community College and an expanded polytechnic institute, both of which became the mid-way point in training between high school and university. Previously, this level of education was available only in a few select public and private schools, thereby restricting access for the majority school population. This not only restructured the education system, but more importantly, it prepared young women and men for university and skills training, readying them for higher level positions in the work force. In addition, the co-ed system offered girls the first real opportunity to compete with boys at some of the most prestigious schools that had previously been exclusively male. Night school started to become quite popular among women, both single and married, who were also enrolling at management training centres. Hidden in all this was the role of race and class that had historically placed a racial dichotomy between the business and professional class and the working class. These educational reforms therefore were to pave the way for the removal of that dichotomy.

Politically, women were becoming more actively involved, particularly at the grassroots level. But their contribution was largely obscured because they were never really in the political frontline even though they were participating from the beginning of the 1950s. Nevertheless, as development took place, there was an increasing need for female labour force participation. And by then, young men and women who had qualified abroad were returning home to make a contribution to the national development of the country.

### **Theoretical Perspectives**

Two models are frequently used to explain gender differentiation in the work place. They contend that because individuals are linked to the social structure, the sociology of work is indeed a study of those linkages that connect individuals to the social structure, and their consequences. Such assumptions have as an undercurrent, not only work relationships, but also external factors that link individuals to the larger society (Feldberg & Glenn, 1988).

To the extent that there is a sex bias in men's and women's work relationships and behaviours, the two models, the job model and the gender model seek to explain, differentially, these relationships and behaviours. In the first instance, the economic activities of men are used as the premise for understanding their social relationships both in the family and in the larger society. Put differently, the job model is used to explain men's social relationships.

For women, their domestic responsibilities (or the gender model), are used to

explain their social relationships. Feldberg and Glenn (1988) assert that it is this differentiation in gender relationships that explains further the sexual division of labour in the nuclear family: the male as the economic provider and the female as the caretaker both in terms of wife and mother. By extension then, the sexual division of labour, and privilege in the nuclear family, are also manifested in terms of the differential treatment of son and daughter.

The authors further point out that where work attitudes and behaviours of men are seen to be inextricably linked to occupational experience, those of women are often interpreted in terms of consequences of their domestic experiences. At the opposite end of the spectrum, Zimmer (1988) identifies powerlessness, rigidity, authoritarianism, and coercion by superiors over subordinates, as factors that influence women's work attitudes principally because of the nature of the jobs they perform. Pointing out the causal factors of women's work attitudes, Zimmer contends it is the lack of opportunity for advancement that is reflective of the low aspirations, job clustering, and their commitment to their unpaid work that women demonstrate.

Even if one were to accept the job and gender models as valid explanations of sex differences in social relationships, a further model must be developed to adequately explain that large segment of each population (male and female) which does not fall into either one of the two models provided. An example, for instance, would be what has come to be known as "house husbands" or those men who, for whatever reason are not part of the labour force. A model must also be developed to explain adequately, if not accurately, the social relationships of the vast number of dynamic women whose labour

force participation is so overwhelming that domestic experiences will fail to explain their social relationships. This model must also give consideration to a new definition of "economic provider" since women are large contributors to the household economy. Females in this group will of course include female heads of households, and females who have become career oriented rather than domesticatedly oriented and those who have postponed raising, or decided against having, a family to pursue a career.

Feldberg and Glenn's major criticisms of the two models are their failure to accommodate variation within groups and to recognize differences or possible changes over time. They further indicate that assumptions of the models are connected and point to the double-standard approach that what is held to be true for the male is not held to be true for the female, and vice versa.

Three aspects of class position that seek to explain social relationships of men and women have been suggested by Lockwood (1958) cited in Crompton and Jones (1984): "Market situation", they define as economic status derived from level of income and its source, the extent of job security, and opportunity for upward mobility in the organization. "Work situation" includes the social relationships developed at work and determined by the individual's place in the division of labour; and finally, "status situation", which the authors claim amounts to the position of prestige which is ascribed to the individual in the hierarchical social structure.

It seems apparent that there is some correlation between Lockwood's theory and the "job and gender" models. The "market situation" closely resembles the job model examined by Glenn and Feldberg, as the context within which the social relationships of

men are couched. On the other hand, the "work situation" reflects the gender model and even as outlined by Lockwood, can easily be applied to men. But because it stipulates that it is determined by the individual's place in the division of labour, it can correspond to the gender model since women's position in the division of labour is determined by the sexual division of labour in the domestic sphere. The status situation as identified by Lockwood may be described as a consequence of the two above aspects which converge to determine one's social status.

By employing the reference group theory, Lipset and Bendix (1969) suggest that the "potentially upward mobile usually reveal anticipatory socialization...". They contend that such a demonstration of anticipatory socialization is a process of absorbing the norms and behavioral traits of the new group before the incumbent becomes a member of that group even before their social position is changed. According to Lipset and Bendix, such persons are subsequently described as conformists to the norms of the reference group to which they aspire, and non-conformists within the group of which they are still members.

If this argument can be transferred to the gender debate an obvious question that emerges is: given the number of women who have moved into positions that have become gender-defined for females, are we to assume that they all displayed the appropriate behaviour of say, bank clerks, and then failed to demonstrate behaviours of any higher placed group in management or administration, for instance? One may ask, however, seeing that men have had the opportunity to function at both the clerical and managerial levels, did they in fact demonstrate the behaviours of the two groups? And

how is it that men are able to move on and up in the corporate world while many women remain in the same occupation and at the same level sometimes for an entire career?

What these and other models seem to overlook is the role of society's perception of a particular group, which, to some degree, serves to reshape that group's own self-perception and is crucial in determining the social relationships of that particular group. In other words, the images of men and women in the work place are a consequence of their socialization, a process, which in itself is a result of society's expectations of the socializing agents. This process in turn is the key element in determining the social relationships of both genders. It is therefore suggested, that more than these theoretical perspectives is needed to explain the feminization of specific occupations and the barriers to upward mobility that women continue to experience.

The literature on gender inequality provides several approaches which attempt to explain the social relationship between women and men and their position in society. Historically, there seemed to have been a more cordial relationship between the role of women and that of men. They interacted for the common good of the family with the role of each group (women and men) playing an important part. However, the rise of capitalism fundamentally separated these two roles into private and public spheres of work. These two spheres in which work was conducted bore different social relations to the production process and as such the work women and men performed inherited different value: the work performed by men was valued in economic and tangible terms whereas that of women was valued in more psychological and abstract terms. It is this point in the division of labour and the distinction made between the two types of work,

that set the stage for the social dynamics that segregate women and men in the division of labour and ultimately in society.

With the expansion of industrial capitalism, women increasingly became participants in the production process while retaining their role in the reproduction process. As participants in the production process, women played a lesser role than men, and were often limited to lighter types of work which was often characterized as routine, low-skill, less valued and dead-end (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1984; Lowe, 1987), than the work that men did. This work differentiation was primarily attributed to the biological differences of women and men. What is also interesting however, is that before women inherited this work, it was performed by men but couched within a variety of other responsibilities.

It was the classification of work and specialization of tasks that took place towards the end of the 19th century that brought women to the office to perform those entry level jobs from which men were moving away (Lowe, 1987). This gave a gender component to the segregation of office work and a differential in wages based on sex. These distinctions made between women and men, first in the home, and afterwards in the labour market, became the focal points of gender inequality in society. A number of theories have been developed to analyze gender inequality, each emerging from different historical junctures. None of these, however, seem to be able to encompass the various elements which play a role in shaping the forces that place an economic separation between the work of women and that of men and the social structures that nurture those forces through the concept of gender inequality. Four main theories have addressed the

issues that surround gender inequality: these are radical feminism, Marxist feminism, the dual-systems theory, and margin to center.

The thrust of radical feminism is a polemic dichotomy between women and men where men as a group, subordinate women as a group, characterizing men consequently, as the enemy of women. Radical feminist theory is multi-pronged with all its prongs linked to biological determinism through sexuality, heterosexuality, and male violence. Proponents of this theory argue that men are the sole beneficiaries of the subordination of women within a patriarchal system that has been fashioned on male violence against women. To support their argument, they suggest that sexual practice is socially constructed in accordance with the desires of men and fails to consider the desires of women. As a result, they believe that heterosexuality is a socially institutionalized practice that becomes the basis for various aspects of gender relations, all of which converge to form a system of control. Such a system, the radical feminists argue, acknowledges the patriarchal structure of society of which men are the major beneficiaries if not the sole beneficiaries. But since its emphasis is based solely on biological difference it becomes a model insufficiently useful to properly analyze the present study which investigates several aspects of gender inequality of which biological difference is but one.

Marxist feminism places gender inequality on the heels of capitalism, giving gender inequality a material base. Projecting male domination over women as a derivative of the domination of capital over labour, it focuses on the construction of class relations and the exploitation of one class over another. And in the case of women as a



class being exploited by men as a class, it establishes gender relations between the two classes by which one becomes superior and the other subordinate. One of the areas of contention however, is the location of this exploitation. Some Marxist feminists contend that the family is the locus of control because of the need of the capitalists for women's domestic labour in the home and its role in the production process. According to this group, women play a role in the production process through the day-to-day reproduction of the worker by preparing food, clean clothes, shelter, and the provision of domestic services that the man would otherwise have to perform or pay for. In addition to this, women in their social relations of reproduction, are actually replenishing, on a generational basis, workers for the capitalist mode of production. What is of primary importance is that these tasks which women perform are wageless.

As some theorists have argued (Hartman, 1979) the woman is given only a subsidy by her husband which is only part of the earnings he received for his labour power. Because the wife had initially provided the reproduction of his labour power, he then exploits her by withholding part of its value which can be termed surplus value. This therefore establishes unequal gender relations between the man and the woman in the domestic sphere because of the exploitative nature of the relationship which further enhances the sexual division of labour within the home, and consolidates the concept of gender inequality. Marxist feminism has been criticized for its inability to account for gender inequality in pre-capitalist and post-capitalist societies (Walby, 1988; Hartman, 1979).

Its failure is associated with having capitalism as its focal point without due

consideration given to the gender component that was prevalent in precapitalist societies where, though evidence indicates a clear division of labour based on sex, the value given to the work of women and men was not measured in economic terms. Linking gender inequality solely to the rise of capitalism must also be seen as erroneous in any analysis of communist societies where the social and political structures show a gender polarization in terms of positions of power and privilege that favoured men. Marxist feminist theory therefore is inappropriate in which to situate the present study since its focus is materially based and gives little or no consideration at all to explaining the role of patriarchy in subordinating women. Other Marxist feminists focus less on the economic component in capitalism and gender relations and like radical feminists, they emphasize gender relations as having developed from the dialectics of masculinity and femininity making it more difficult to reduce the debate only to economic relations of capitalism.

Proponents of the dual systems theory make a link between the capitalist and patriarchal approaches rather than focusing exclusively on one or the other. They contend, through the dual systems theory, that the two systems play a crucial role in the social construction of gender inequality, which in current literature, is analyzed as a consequence of patriarchal and capitalist structures. Some theorists (Hartman, 1979; Eisenstein, 1979) for instance, argue that the interaction between the systems is so significant, that even though they may conceptually be analytically different, through their interaction they become one. And according to Walby (1990) where patriarchy constructs a system based on control, law and order, capitalism concentrates on the

amassing of profits. Mitchell (1975) on the other hand supports the view that capitalism operates on an economic dimension while patriarchy functions on the ideological level. Employing a Freudian analysis, Mitchell, unlike radical feminists, situates patriarchal domination within the confines of the rule of the father rather than the domination of men, through the concept of the Oedipus Complex and the kingship system.

It is through the system of patriarchy or the patriarchal structure, that capitalism seems to thrive best. Therefore, a major change in one of these systems, will of necessity effect change in the other because of their interactive nature. The challenge by women today in calling for gender equality in society, would pose a serious threat to the future of capitalism. Through the existing patriarchal structures the work of women and men is valued differently to benefit capitalists through the availability of cheap labour power of women, and the ability to hold this reserve of labour in abeyance that reduces the need to employ the more expensive labour power of men. The increasing number of married women in the labour market has helped to create a more flexible work force and a less rigid work schedule which coincides with the domestic responsibilities of married women. While these changes in work patterns are attractive to married women, they also provide the employer with the opportunity to exploit this available labour power.

The dual systems theory seems to be the theory most harmonious with the present study as it analyzes gender relations within the context of patriarchal and capitalist relations. However, this theory must be extended to include feminist theory from margin to centre, developed by Hooks, 1984. Hooks recognizes capitalist and patriarchal relations and gives much consideration to the class component inherent in gender

relations, particularly as they relate to black American women who generally operate on the margins of society and therefore are faced with a completely different struggle from white middle class American women. It is these women, according to Hooks, who form a femalestream which, by definition, excludes disadvantaged black American women.

The concept of the peripheralization of women makes this theory appropriate for the present study. Unlike Hooks's analysis of the class component within women's advancement, the women in Barbados, as seen in this study, present one class in terms of gender and occupation. Women generally, are located on the periphery of the social structure, despite the progress observed in the past three or so decades. Some women have broken down the barriers and have moved into male spaces, but professionally, socially, economically, and more importantly, politically, they do not, or are not seen to, form part of the core or center of that male structure. They are marginalized.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The dependency theory is the theoretical framework which I will be using in this thesis, despite the utility of some of the other models discussed in the last few pages under "Theoretical Perspectives". The dependency theory has as its basic tenets the interdependence of two societies or two social systems. The interdependence however, relates to the development of one society at the expense or underdevelopment of the other. This interdependence may also take place within a society whereby sections of that society relate to the metropole in a dependency manner. When this occurs, the core or metropole becomes more developed as the periphery or its margins become underdeveloped through exploitative means (Fagerlind & Saha: 1989).

Marx's analysis of the relational effect of the bourgeoisie to the proletariat projects a system that functions on a dependency theory. This suggests the continued development of the bourgeoisie and the exploitation of the proletariat, which, as a result, remains in its dependency state. In a wider context, the dependency theory reflects the relationship between former empires and their colonies, and more recently, between industrialized societies and Third World countries. These four paradigms reflect a method of dependency between the advantaged and the disadvantaged, with the major concern being improving the situation of the disadvantaged. But in reality, this hardly ever occurs. The core or the metropole, the bourgeoisie, the industrialized, and the empires, have always been the beneficiaries of the economic relationship with the periphery, the proletariat, the Third World, and the colonies, as the case may be. The dependency theory and the theory of imperialism are diametrically opposed to each other. Where exploitation and domination of the poor country form the central focus of imperialism,

dependency theory concerns itself with the extent to which the poor countries depend on the rich ones. The theory also focuses on the concept that the disadvantaged position of the less developed societies is caused in large part by the developed societies.

The dependency theory can be extended to include the situation of women within a given society. Identifying women as the disadvantaged population, the relationship between the situation of women and the advantaged population, in this case men, is one of dependency, on all levels. And it is this relationship by which women have inherited their subordinate position, and men their superior position.

The subordinate role of women in society has been addressed by a vast number of writers using a variety of perspectives (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1984; Walby, 1988; 1990; Eisenstein, 1988; Hartman, 1988; Mitchell, 1988; Bryson, 1992), many of whom have used an economic model for analysis, often debating the point at which women became subordinate to men. Radical feminists point to biological determinism (Eisenstein, 1988); Marxist feminists contend it was the rise of capitalism through industrialization, and others argue that while patriarchy preceded capitalism it interacts with capitalism to the extent that it has developed a theory of capitalist-patriarchy (Hartman, 1988). But in the relational discourse, women are the subordinate group. The dependency theory questions the process through which this has occurred and the effects of that relationship.

While the dependency theory sufficiently supports the framework for the study, the theory developed by Hooks (1992) from margin to centre provides the appropriate model. Hooks's theory analyzes the situation of black women in American society. She

argues that in spite of the rise of the Women's Movement and the change in status that women have achieved, much debate focuses on middle class white American women and fails to incorporate the situation of deprived black American women.

Hooks argues that the literature generated by feminist debate addresses the concerns of a privileged population or middle class white women. She is critical of some of the champion feminist writers such as Freidan (1974) and Simone De Beauvoir (1976) for their failure to fully address women's issues including those of disadvantaged women such as black and other poor American women who work as nannies and in the kitchen's of middle class white women. According to Hooks, when Freidan talks about the void or the mystique that women experience, she is addressing those women who are bored by remaining at home with nothing to do while their husbands are out working and poor and black women are taking care of their domestic needs. That need to go out and work, argues Hooks, is a middle class need because a large segment of the female population was already out there working, out of necessity.

The debate then, does not address the needs of that segment of the population whose needs are profoundly different. These women, Hooks writes, who operate on the periphery of the society are in the unique position of living on the margins and working in the core or metropole. These are the women with the double perspective of women's situation, who become even more depressed as they observe what life is like for those in the core but must return to live what it is for them on the periphery.

This model is appropriate for the study of gender and occupation in Barbados where over 30 years ago, the colonial power was displaced by local powers who initiated

the development process. During this 30-year period, the society as a whole has undergone rapid social and economic change. Class divisions were dismantled (even though new classes have emerged) in an effort to bring about a more egalitarian society. What is of primary importance is that during these 30 years, within this process the relationship between women and men remains one of dependency. Women have indeed achieved more, have gained more educational opportunities, more employment opportunities, more social status, but their relationship with men has not changed. They remain in a dependency state: whether it is in the home, in the work place, in society, women are always found in a subordinate position to men. And as Fagerlind and Saha point out, women's exploitative position consolidates men's superior position.

Much research has been carried out on changing work patterns of women in industrialized societies, but very little has been done to highlight the transformation of labour markets, particularly in the West Indies, in which women are now playing a major role even though men still dominate. The study therefore, examines the situation of women in the professional labour market in Barbados, and analyzes their peripheral relationship with men at the core of these professions. The feminist theory from margin to centre will be used for the analysis of gender and occupation in Barbados.



## **Chapter 2**

### **Gender and Occupation**

The role of women in society has become a fertile area for academic research. The popularity of this subject suggests we are living in a society in which the role of women is changing due to their increasing labour force participation. This change will ultimately affect the role of men in society. In view of this distinction between the two groups, women and men, the concept of gender inequality emerges. Universally, women share a common position: they are generally subordinate to men in accordance with the hierarchically structured society constructed by men. Society has become a polarized social system in which women and men are perceived and treated differently through various and obscure means. What mechanisms are used to mete out this differential treatment?

The ongoing debate on the changing role of women in society has generated various approaches to addressing the emergent issues. These approaches sometimes clarify old concepts and often take the debate to another dimension. The social context within which women's role is changing is important in determining the outcome of such change since within that social system, certain dynamics take place. There is foremost, a segregation of work based on sex, the pattern of which is fashioned by the system in which it occurs. Sex segregation of work defines certain jobs for women and others for men. Ultimately, this process polarizes women and men in the work force and later in the wider society projecting distinct power relations which place women in a subordinate

To challenge this, women have been moving into male-dominated professions in an attempt to remove that bias and to demonstrate that women can function effectively in those jobs. However, women do not generally move very quickly in these new positions and due to their minority status, promoting the few to that level was generally seen as tokenism in the work place. The structure of the social system, the sex segregation of work, the subsequent feminization of clerical work, the movement of women into previously male dominated professions, and the concept of tokenism will be discussed in order to provide the context within which the study has been developed.

Batista (1977) characterizes a system as having concrete and abstract aspects. Its concrete components make up the various elements which combine to make it into a system and which adopt different characteristics over time. These are generally known as system variables. The system's abstract aspects (according to Batista) refer to the set of rules or functions which relate the system variables to one another providing information on how the system is organized. This is also known as the structure of the system, with two of its main properties being hierarchical organization and structural analysis (Batista, 1977:67). Through its hierarchical nature, the system becomes part of a more complex structure and is a synthesis of a set of sub-systems which represent its parts. Through the property of structural analysis the system reflects a combination of hierarchical organization and wholeness as its mode of analysis. Explained differently, it is the hierarchical organization that allows for the analysis of the whole complex structure. This brings us to the structure of the labour market which is a complex component of the larger social system, and the situation of women and men within that

sub-system. In an effort to better understand the distinction given to the role of women and men in this system, it is perhaps appropriate to use a definitive approach as the point of departure.

Webster's (1988) definitions of 'man' and 'woman' are instructive in conceptualizing the extent to which women and men are perceived differentially. Defining 'man', Webster states: "Homo Sapiens, a member of a role of erect, biped mammals, *with a highly developed brain, having the powers of articulate speech, abstract reasoning and imagination; the human race in general*; ... one of the pieces used in playing as one man unison, unanimously man for man comparing individuals in one group with those in another..."

The definition of woman is interestingly different, and is as follows: "an adult female human being ... the female sex, **women in general**; a rather *fussy* and *effeminate* *man* the woman womanly feeling womanliness, *the woman in her was aroused*..."

In view of the fact that this has veered so far away from the definition of man, the next word 'womanish' was checked which Webster defines as "characteristics of a woman; ... *not showing proper manly characteristics*."

From these definitions 'woman' is clearly portrayed by Webster as a negative representation of man, for whom sexual terms are used to characterize her very being, unlike the man, whose definition encompasses very powerful terms, projecting even a notion of camaraderie by "unanimously comparing individuals in one group with those in another ... *man for man teams evenly matched*. ..." The terminology used implies physical strength and the comparability of different groups of men. The definitions for

"woman" and "womanish" are very limiting, and provide no really clear meaning: one who was womanish supposedly had the characteristics of a woman or not showing properly manly characteristics. Webster characterizes woman as an inferior being to man on many levels, employing the qualities of man as the departure point of assessment. Gender inequality therefore seeps into the way in which women and men are perceived, which no doubt, gives rise to the distinction made in the roles they are given in society and in the workplace.

Historically, women's participation in the labour market has been controlled to varying degrees by the state. When there is a shortage of labour (as in the two world wars), various incentives are used to entice women into the labour force and when there is a surplus of labour (e.g. at the end of those wars or during an economic recession) women are discouraged with those incentives either being modified or withdrawn altogether. Women become a displaced segment of the labour market and consequently, fall victim to strategies which are widely known to create in Marxist terms a 'reserved army of labour' (Braverman, 1974. Walby, 1988; Bryson, 1992).

Different approaches are used to analyze the movement of women in and out of the labour market and to characterize the forces that marginalize them. Moving beyond the concept of cheap labour through part-time work, Walby (1988:117) contends that it is labour market segmentation and technological advancement that are directly related to the surplus of women who form the reserved labour market. She questions the debate that part-time work, a by-product of the 'reserved army of labour', stemmed principally from a response of employers to supply fluctuations of labour and argues instead, that it is a

derivative of the demand side and not the supply side, which takes its cue from cost-effective approach policies. Employing the case of Britain to corroborate her argument, Walby points to a period of growth in employment rates over three decades which originated solely from growth in part-time employment in the face of persistent unemployment patterns of both women and men. She asserts that such change originates as much from forces of the labour demand side, as it does from preferences of employment patterns exhibited by married women (Walby, 1988: 117-118).

Sex segregation in the work force is seen as a mechanism to reinforce men's position in the labour market hierarchy and hence in society. The powerful force of this hierarchical structure places men in every class, in every situation, in a privileged position over women. A position which Hartman (1979) argues men will have to give up if the subordination of women is to be eradicated, pointing out that this must go beyond the labour market to include the domestic division of labour which favours men as well. According to Hartman, sex segregation has its roots in patriarchy and more recently in capitalism both of which now interact efficiently to reinforce the position of men and keep women in subordination. Through this interaction between the two systems, argues Hartman, they become so interdependent that they converge to form a system of capitalist-patriarchy by which women are exploited in both the production and reproduction processes. Other theorists provide alternate assessments (Barrett, 1975; Mitchell, 1977; Eisenstein 1979; Walby, 1988) but all of whom concede that women are subordinated in society.

Men are essentially the beneficiaries of women's subordination through a

patriarchal system that encourages women to provide sexual, domestic and child-rearing services for men (Strober, 1982). Strober asserts that male employers, allow men the opportunity to choose which jobs they want to dominate except in those cases where female characteristics are explicitly required for the job (such as elementary school teaching, and nursing), with the remaining jobs offered to women. Strober also contends that where enough women are not available to fill the positions left by men, the employers seek out immigrants as substitutes. Reflecting segmentation in the labour market, this also implies the development of a subtle class hierarchy.

Strober rejects Oppenheimer's (1970) hypothesis that women will customarily fill those jobs that require high levels of pre-job training such as nursing and teaching, and jobs that are generally performed in the home. She bases her rejection on the grounds that jobs such as law and medicine in the United States (and indeed elsewhere) which require high levels of pre-job training are still male domains. She also questions the fact that certain jobs with a domestic orientation when performed in the public sphere (e.g. meal preparation, baking and food serving), become the male jobs of "chefs, bakers, and food servers" (Strober, 1970: 146). And it may be added that they often command higher salaries when performed by men, yet in the home, and in society, they are often characterized as unskilled, routine, low class, low paying jobs, even when a woman is paid (usually less) to perform them in the domestic environment.

Occupational segregation can be subdivided into horizontal and vertical segregation, the former of which identifies such female jobs as clerical, secretarial, nursing, kindergarten and elementary school teaching and retail sales. The latter is

depicted as male jobs which are identified as electrician, plumbers, garbage collectors, bricklayers, carpenters, painters, engineers, and business managers (Peitchinis: 1989). Peitchinis also adds legal, medical and accounting professions as being identified with, and dominated by males.

With vertical segregation there are few women at the higher levels of the employment hierarchy primarily because women's climb up has of late been relatively fast up to and including the middle management level and then slows down significantly beyond that point, even in occupations dominated by women. Horizontal and vertical segregation according to Peitchinis, lead to a third form where Peitchinis states it is manifested in the creation of additional middle-management horizontal positions rather than higher level positions. Peitchinis terms this a "consolation prize" or the "failure to promote". Intra-occupational segregation is a fourth form of segregation which is created through segregation within occupations through special assignments and appointments to special committees. Peitchinis labels this as the first phase of screening for promotion and identifies it as the assignment of functional responsibilities, which he terms the most critical form of segregation since it specifies who acquires the opportunity to gain experience and demonstrates requisite qualities for promotion (Peitchinis, 1989: 61).

Many authors cite the overcrowding theory to explain women's disadvantaged position in the labour force (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1984; Hartman, 1986; Walby, 1988), but Peitchinis (1989) suggests that overcrowding and segregation may indeed present an inaccurate impression of the basis on which these choices are made over and above all others for which women are qualified. Placing less emphasis on pay, Peitchinis

(1989:62) points to the "nature of work, the work environment, work relationships, flexibility and variety of work, and transferability of work experience" as motivating factors of choice.

In African and Asian societies, segregation of work takes on a different meaning as men and women are found to be doing the same work in different locations. Using an economic approach to occupational segregation, Boserup (1970) states that market trade is performed by women in some regions and by men in others. Women's activity in trade primarily surrounds agricultural products (e.g. fruits, vegetables, milk, eggs, and poultry), while meat is generally sold by men. But she further states that in regions where women dominate rural and urban markets in food trade, they also dominate the farming activities. The inverse holds true for the men: if agriculture is a male occupation in a given region, then, men take care of the trading aspects as well.

Boserup explains that men "usually despise occupations manned predominantly by women, be it agriculture or trade, and they will normally hesitate to take part in such work" (Boserup, 1970: 92). Consequently, there is an interesting mix of gender and occupation which gives rise to a new type of social relations of production: local women and male immigrants combine to perform the wholesale and some retail trade in West Africa where local men refuse to become involved. The pattern, also observed in East Africa and South East Asia, can easily lead to foreign male dominance of local markets since native males stay away from trading business which they consider to be a feminine occupation. What is striking about this situation is that dominance of the trading business can even be taken over by foreign men even when local women are involved. Couched



in this view is the extent to which men (both local and foreign) can choose to dominate occupational categories in which women play a major role. The choice men have whether to become involved in this business implies that women only come to dominate an area of business when men (local and foreign) choose not to participate at that level. When men dominate an area of work, they often receive higher wages than women in the same type of business or comparable business activity, and it is this sex segregation in work, which many authors claim is responsible for the wage differential between women and men.

Human capital theorists have linked the wage differential to differences in productivity levels and suggest that the way in which the individual can be more productive is by making an investment in human capital, e.g. by acquiring higher levels of education (Stevenson, 1978). Even though a valid argument is made here and applies equally to both women and men, it is suggested that the wage differential and occupational segregation are firmly rooted in a persistent gender bias that favours males. While it is recognized that many women, at the lower levels of the hierarchy can benefit from educational investment, the human capital theory does not explain the situation of those women, perhaps farther up the ladder, who are as qualified and perhaps more qualified than their male colleagues, who are persistently paid lower wages.

The cost of educational investment is often higher for women than it is for men, given the fact that women often have to postpone marriage and children, sometimes forfeiting their reproductive potential in order to advance their career. This is frequently observed when the educational investment is made after being in the job market or

careers that require many years of advanced training. Educational investment is seen as a determinant for narrowing the gap between women and men and reducing inequality in income distribution (Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1985: 266-267). While it may be useful in reducing overall inequality, it often does little to quell the income disparities between women and men, and as Psacharopoulos & Woodhall state, it may even increase inequality in income between some groups. For instance, if income disparities between women and men are already present, and both groups participate in human capital investment, while private returns may be observed, the wage disparities will remain intact.

Wage differentials that favour men are not restricted to low level jobs, as is observed throughout the labour market where the wages of men and women can routinely be manipulated to favour men. Some of the methods used to achieve this wage disparity include changing the job description, changing the job title, relocating the job within the same office, and changing the line of authority. Stevenson (1978) uses the "crowding hypothesis" to explain why women are held back in entry level positions, contending that they are often willing to accept employment in a male occupation at a lower wage than a lower wage in a female job where the wage is even lower. Generally, the hypothesis argues that women's wages are artificially low, while men's are artificially high because of the large number of women available for so few opportunities. But where there are few women available for jobs requiring high levels of education, women's salaries are often lower than men's at the same level. The crowding of women in low level jobs seems to originate not only from a supply and demand situation, but from corporate

strategies that disadvantage women, and limit their mobility in the job market. Sex discrimination in the labour market keeps women in a crowding situation.

On the heels of industrialization, emphasis and attention shifted from an agricultural economy, to the modern industrial state fuelled by industrial capitalism. Because of this shift, the extended family system that was an instrumental force in subsistence economies and home industries was de-emphasized as the nuclear family gained prominence in response to new patterns of consumption and mass production. Such economic development played an intricate role in redefining the work that men and women do. One of its immediate objectives was to transform the man's role into a public activity by moving it away from the home and at the same time, it concentrated the woman's role into a private activity by confining it to the "domestic" sphere. It is argued therefore, that this early sexual division of labour, even in its industrial infancy, became the linchpin of the plethora of issues in the gender debate that have emerged from industrial development and economic expansion.

With further economic expansion came another shift, this time primarily affecting the lifestyle of women. As industrialization became more sophisticated and required a more diverse labour force, women's role in the development process became at least, two-dimensional: while retaining their private role in the domestic sphere they were able to participate as well in the public sphere. First due to the shortage of male labour, and secondly due to the needs of a more diversified economy. Women therefore played two roles, a private role and a public role. Men on the other hand retained their one public role. And this is not to suggest that men do not share the private role of women in the

home, but because the role is inherently attributed to women, its full responsibility rests with the woman, not with the man, even when he shares it equally, the role is still seen publicly as that of the woman. And the woman has been socialized to perceive it as such too. The man's principal responsibility in the eyes of society then, is his public role in the production process.

By the time women were participating in the public sphere at a noticeable level, men had already given gender definitions and structure to the jobs that they performed so that women were perceived and felt to be moving into male domains, placing them in a contradictory role: they not only had to adjust to working inside and outside the home, but they had to function within a structure that had recognized only the needs of the men who performed these jobs earlier. Boserup (1970) contends however, that such a rigid sexual division of labour is principally found in the modern industrial state. For in the subsistence and home industry economies, most of the roles men perform are also performed by women. Weaving and basket-making are two of the activities Boserup cites. What is also important to note, is that these activities are performed by both sexes. For instance, Boserup states that these jobs are performed by males in a given community and by females in another. The reproduction of these occupations by gender is guaranteed by the fact that when males are responsible for producing such products, they are assisted by a number of young males who may include their sons and other young boys. As they mature in the activity, they are able to carry on the role as their superiors did. The same holds true for the activities performed by females. Daughters and other young girls experience a similar apprenticeship system in order to develop the

necessary skills to conduct the activity (produce and market the products) when they mature.

The gender definitions given to occupations in a capitalist industrial economy occur in a hierarchical context that segregates women and men and the jobs that they perform. This takes place as women are moved into the low level occupations vacated by the males who have emerged as upwardly mobile. Boserup (1970) points out that women and men in some developing countries often perform the same jobs and that conversion from one economic stage to another does not favour one gender over the other as observed in industrial societies. What are the techniques employed to avoid jobs becoming gender defined in developing societies? Commodities produced at the subsistence level by females or by males, remained in the hands of that gender under the new mode of production even if the commodities had changed in form. For example, the corresponding activity was conducted by the relevant group so that women and men who worked in the family in the subsistence economy assumed the responsibility for "ready-made dishes, cloth, pots or baskets..." under the new mode of production (Boserup, 1970).

Contrastingly, in the capitalist mode of production, work is polarized by gender through a hierarchical division of labour where men perform the "mental" aspects of a job and women the manual aspects in distinctly different work settings. Even where both sexes perform the same work in the same settings, different job titles are used to differentiate between the work that men do and that which women do (Bielby & Baron, 1986).

Researchers have approached the sexual division of labour both in developing and industrialized societies from various perspectives, but generally, the same themes emerge perhaps because the differentiation made between men's work and women's work is universal (Bielby & Baron, 1986). In Britain, the U.S.A., and Canada, the movement of women from the home to the labour market reflected the same basic objective: to occupy the clerical positions that men were vacating in response to a "scientific approach" to management which commenced in the last decade or two of the nineteenth century. But more than one hundred years later, the majority of women in the labour force are still confined to clerical work. This has been justified on the grounds that women's domestic responsibility is assumed to be secondary to their labour force participation and that their commitment must therefore be to the home and not to their job.

### **The Feminization of Clerical Work**

The feminization of clerical work commenced at the turn of the twentieth century when two major principles of industrial capitalism were work organization and work specialization. Although women had already entered the labour force in the United States during the American Civil War in 1860, the real female impact was felt only when a new approach to management resulted in specialization of tasks, and consequently, began the expansion of the labour force. In Great Britain, early feminization of clerical work commenced with the General Post Office in 1870 when it hired its first female staff (Cohn, 1984). The shift to feminization of clerical work has been investigated and linked

to cheap female labour which addresses only part of the question since women, in many cases, are still being excluded from many employment opportunities associated with low levels of wages (Cohn, 1984).

From the historical perspective, the clerical worker performed most of the office duties including many of what are today termed managerial functions (Braverman, 1974). But the rise of corporate capitalism and the scientific approach to management were both influencing factors in the restructuring of clerical work which brought many dimensions to it: a redistribution of occupations and work, a gender definition given to the sector, the technological process, and the segregation and polarization of men and women in the office. Braverman points out that the earlier version of clerical work had two distinguishing features implicit in the titles of "clerk", and "chief clerk", who in essence was the manager. Essentially, this reflected a close relationship in the two roles, but more importantly, that one could be promoted from clerk to chief clerk.

But since the reorganization of clerical work, and the specialization of tasks has been popularized, management no longer rises from within the clerical ranks, but instead, is generally recruited from business schools and universities which had seized the opportunity to capitalize on this new approach to management. These institutions have been responding to the changing dynamics of the labour market since the late nineteenth century offering to the business community, training courses designed to correspond to the new approach to management.

More specifically, they offered training for men, and for young women who were going into the paid labour force above the factory level. These women came primarily

from a middle class background (Pringle, 1989; Weiner, 1985; Scot, 1982; Braverman, 1974) and would remain in the labour force until marriage. It has been argued by some scholars (Kanter, 1977) that it was in the office that many of these women met their husbands.

Married women who were in the paid labour force were usually there to supplement their family's financial support and were disproportionately black and poor (Weiner, 1985), as well as immigrants and native born poor whites. Weiner also argues that the higher the husband's income the less likely the wife would be in the paid labour force. This emerged from a class bias in society and because a married woman's labour force participation was perceived as "a final defense against destitution" and not as an expectation, it acted as a deterrent for married women to enter the paid labour force. Weiner points to the fact that at the turn of the century, two-thirds of the single women in the United States in the female labour force were native born whites, while one half of the wives working in "unskilled jobs were black (Weiner, 1985: 84-85).

One of the most obviously gendered clerical positions that developed was the secretarial job. Initially, this job attracted young white middle-class American women who had gone on to business school to acquire the necessary skills, while lower class native American women and immigrant women worked primarily in factories. Encompassing poise, wardrobe, and beauty care, the skills taught were obviously designed to bring female characteristics to the jobs these women were to fill, and indeed a feminine touch to the typewriter and telephone. Both of these became permanent fixtures of the secretarial job after World War II.



To the extent that the young women who entered clerical occupations and in particular, secretarial positions, came from the middle class, there was a certain department linked to these new positions. Particularly to those positions identified as private secretary where it was usually assumed that in addition to the training the person received, there was some close similarity in social status to that of the boss. However, because these women assumed these occupations only until marriage, a rapid turnover would have been anticipated and did indeed take place. For this rapid turnover, coupled with economic growth, meant that ultimately, individuals outside of the middle class would be recruited for these positions. This became more likely as educational growth took place, making it possible for a much broader segment of the society to acquire the necessary skills.

As more and more women moved into the labour market by the mid-twentieth century, many of them did not leave when they married. In subsequent years, since the 1960's for instance, when the Women's Movement was newly flourishing, many women abandoned their domestic responsibilities and moved back into the labour market permanently. In Canada, women's labour force participation rate was 38.3% compared to 77.8% for men. By 1988 a significant increase was recorded for women; 57.4% and a slight decrease for men with a new rate of 76.6% (Statistics Canada, 1990). This increase was perhaps in response to the need for two incomes in an effort to maintain the standard of living of the family that seemed threatened by a rising cost of living. In Barbados, the change was also evident in 1960: 40% of the adult female population was in the labour market, compared to 72.3% of the adult male population. By 1980, 55%

of the adult females participated (an increase of 14.5%) while for men, it was 80.4% or an increase of 8.1%. This large differential may be explained in terms of increased educational opportunities, a more diversified economy and an increase in job opportunities, and/or a new self perception women were developing (Barbados Population Census 1960, Vol. 11; 1980-1981 population Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean).

Some researchers have started to question the feminization of certain jobs, in particular, clerical and service occupations. And the questions are valid ones when one considers that men performed these jobs previously. Perhaps then, it would be appropriate to question the prior "masculinization" of these jobs. In any event, such "masculinization" of these and most other jobs was in harmony with the general paid labour force, and most of the dominant structures of society. Hence, since the labour market has become more "responsive" to women, the relevant question remains: why certain jobs have since been defined as female jobs?

Industries that are labour intensive are designed to minimize labour costs, and because male clerks have traditionally been paid higher wages, it became more economical to feminize the clerical work even though within the clerical labour force there still remain a number of male enclaves in activities such as shipping, railway, and engineering (Cohn, 1985). Peitchinis (1989:62) poses some pertinent questions in an effort to determine how gender definitions are given to some occupations. He asks for instance, what does a job entail that would make it a woman's job?

One major all-encompassing question must still be posed. Did the men who performed these functions previously demonstrate the same characteristics, such as

aptitude, emotions, and interpersonal communication skills? In the event that they did, how is it they were able to move up the corporate ladder when opportunities arose or were created? And how is it that women still seem to be facing the same barriers for as long as they have been in the labour market with the exception of the war years? (a time when they were called upon to fill many of the important positions which were vacated by men who went off to war). Thus it becomes necessary to examine the movement of women into non-traditional fields as a career option.

### **Women and Male-dominated occupations**

The onset of industrial capitalism can be characterized as the watershed for the hierarchical division of labour that ensued. This structure has impacted women in two important ways. First, it prompted the redesign or restructuring of the office that either freed up or created positions for women to participate more fully in the paid labour market. Second, once this structure was fully established, certain jobs were earmarked for men and others earmarked for women. Not only was there segregation of work but there was also "spatial segregation" in the work place (Scott, 1982). This helped to emphasize the polarization of men and women in the labour force and in the workplace. Some men begin their career with a corporation and move up the ladder, learning the various aspects of the business until they reach their final level in the corporation. Women, on the other hand, have been known to begin and end their career at entry level, where they can spend an entire working career.

More recently, women have been challenging the "job ghetto" in which they are

clustered and because they are better educated and are qualified for more professions and occupations, they are making serious demands of the system and opposing the exclusionary measures used to retain male dominance in certain jobs and professions. Between 1971 and 1981 more than one million women entered the labour force in Canada, which far outnumbered men. A little less than half of these women were under 40 years of age and went into occupations that in 1971 were principally dominated by men: between 1971 and 1981 the number of female doctors increased by more than 50%, from 3000 in 1971 to 6,500 in 1981. Similarly, the number of female lawyers increased from 770 in 1971 to 5,000 in 1981 (Moore, 1987).

It is generally believed that personal choice is fundamentally responsible for outcomes women experience in the labour force. This belief raises many questions since more women than men are enrolling in university courses. It would perhaps be useful to examine the educational levels that women have been achieving in Barbados now that equality of educational opportunity is said to exist.

There has been noticeable change in areas of concentration with an increase of women going into business (Roberge, 1988). Women are also obtaining higher levels of qualification. Nationally, the distribution of university degrees reflect a similar pattern among women: they received 53% of the bachelor's, 45% of the master's, and 29% of the doctoral degrees. (Statistics Canada, 1990). This change in academic concentration provides the preparation for integration into the male dominated fields.

Reporting on the type of women who go into non-traditional jobs, Nevill and Schlecker (1988) found that strong self-efficacy, expectations, and assertiveness had a

relationship to increased willingness to move into non-traditional jobs but not for traditional occupations. The higher their level of self-efficacy and assertiveness, the more willing they were to make the transition. Nevill and Schlecker contend that career counsellors should reinforce such behaviours in women so as to encourage them to acquire the requisite skills for the non-traditional roles. However, it was also found that the mean score of the group's willingness to move into career related activities of non-traditional jobs was not found to be greater than the mean score for willingness to move into career related activities of traditional jobs.

Nevill and Schlecker conclude from their study that even though the levels of self-efficacy and assertiveness were high for willingness to move into career activities linked to non-traditional jobs, it appeared as though women's preference of career activity favoured those associated with the traditional job. Comparatively, Nevill and Schlecker point out that males felt more confident in their ability to perform the job requirements of both traditional and non-traditional occupations but that females exhibited less confidence in their ability to perform non-traditional jobs compared to traditional jobs.

This lack of confidence is relatively understandable since the non-traditionality of occupations for men is perhaps only referring to those jobs once performed by men which have since been characterized as low level and routine occupations dominated by women today. Despite the fact that men performed these jobs previously, they do not generally call for any complex skills that would present a threat of failure. Conversely, women display more confidence in performing traditional occupations over the non-traditional. Even though they may have the requisite qualifications, their perception of

the man's occupation as technical or complex, and inaccessible, may help to deter women from aspiring to these occupations which some researchers have referred to as "fear of success" (Foxworth, 1980), but perhaps which can equally be described as fear of failure.

Other studies show that younger females are taking up the challenge and making inroads into the traditionally, higher-paying male dominated occupations, while older females tend to remain with the traditional, low paying female-defined jobs. Boulet and Lavallée (1984) confirm that the security of the male dominated jobs has been eroded by women who seek to move into the traditionally perceived male occupations. Between 1971 and 1981, for instance, close to two million women entered the labour force in Canada. In Barbados an increase of over 11,000 (24.8%) women entered the labour force during the same period, and for men the increase was 6,014 or 11%. Statistically, it would appear that these fields are becoming much more receptive to females than they were in the past. However, when the general distribution of the working female population is analyzed for 1970 and 1980 it becomes clear that the majority of women in the labour force were still in those jobs traditionally characterized as female, as Table 1 shows.

Table 1  
Distribution of Males and Females in  
the Labour Force, Barbados, 1970 & 1980

Occupational Category	Male		Female	
	1970	1980	1970	1980
Professional & Technical	9.3	9.5	9.6	11.3
Admin. & Managerial	2.1	.3	2.6	.8
Clerical	6.2	13.8	8.8	20.7
Transp. & Communication	2.2	.3	-	-
Sales	6.3	13.5	7.1	11.6
Services	11.1	32.4	10.5	26.3
Agriculture & Related	16.2	14.5	11.3	8.6
Production & Related	38.5	12.6	50.1	20.7
Labourers & Others n.e.c.	8.2	3.0	-	-
Totals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	54477	56675	36591	42697

Source: Adapted from Table C11, 1980-1981 Population Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean.

The substantial increase in female participation in "clerical" and "production and related" is misleading since in the first instance "clerical" and "transport and communication" was not used in 1980 but included in the category "clerical". "Labourers and workers not elsewhere specified" (with totals of 8.2 and 3.0 for males and females respectively, for 1970) was collapsed into "production" for 1980, hence the increase in figures. However it is interesting to note that more women are moved into the "professional" and "Administrative and Managerial" categories in 1980. Nevertheless, these categories (particularly "Professional & Technical") are very broad and may

include elementary school teachers and nurses in the case of females, and politicians, diplomats and chief executive officers in the case of males, giving a very broad range in salaries for males and females at the two ends of the spectrum.

**Table 2**  
**Distribution of Males and Females in**  
**Industrial Occupations in Barbados, 1970 & 1980**

Industrial Group	Male		Female	
	1970	1980	1970	1980
Agriculture & Forestry, etc.	17.4	11.1	15.9	09.0
Mining, Refining & Quarrying	00.6	00.5	00.1	00.0
Manufacturing	16.0	12.0	14.0	20.4
Electricity, gas and water	02.1	02.0	00.3	00.2
Construction & Installation	21.3	16.5	00.9	00.8
Commerce	12.5	11.9	19.2	15.6
Transp. Stor. & Communication	08.4	10.0	01.8	03.4
Finance, Ins. & Realestate	00.0	01.9	00.0	03.4
Government	00.0	12.3	00.0	08.5
Community Services	00.0	05.3	00.0	13.7
Other Services	21.7	16.5	47.8	25.0
Totals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total numbers	52200	55202	35380	41622

Source: Adapted from Table C12 of the 1980-1981 Population Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean, Barbados, Volume 3.

Table 2 shows that the majority of females in the industrial category are in manufacturing, commerce, community services, and other services, while the majority of the males are located in manufacturing, construction and installation, government and



other services. In the category such as government, where on a percentage basis males surpass females by 3.8%, numerically, males outnumber females by 3,225. Furthermore, due to the females being the numerical minority overall, males are more evenly distributed by group as opposed to females, whose largest populations are in manufacturing and service areas. Although women are indeed moving into non-traditional areas of work, there will be no sharp reflection for sometime, because the numbers are still small, recognizing that these women are first generation women and are still numerically a minority.

### *Tokenism in the Workplace*

Tokenism, as it relates to the workplace, has frequently been addressed in terms of women's experience at the managerial level and in male-dominated occupations, as a numerical minority. Kanter (1977) defines tokenism as a representation of less than 15%. Kanter argues that women's position in organizations will improve if their representation is significantly improved.

But Zimmer contends that Kanter did not present a tested hypothesis but instead relied on an inductive approach where observation of women in a corporate setting was one of her major tools of analysis. Zimmer takes issue with the perspective of underrepresentation of women, suggesting that unless there is some evidence to support a correlational relationship between "relative numbers and occupational consequences" there is no supporting evidence for the hypothesis that increasing the numerical representation will improve women's working conditions (Zimmer, 1988: 64-65).

Tokenism within the context of the workplace, related to the presence of women in male-dominated occupations. It less frequently addressed the inverse situation, and Kanter contends that because women at the managerial level were so few, they became more of a symbolic gesture and quite often a visible indication that the corporation did not discriminate against women.

Yoder and Sinnett investigated the relationship of the negative consequences of tokenism to the disproportionate representation of one group over a subgroup. Visibility, contrast (i.e. the sharp distinction observed of the two genders at the same level), and assimilation have been identified as the negative consequence of tokenism that women experience in the workplace (Yoder and Sinnett: 1985; Kanter, 1977).

Contrary to the argument of other scholars that women experience problems at the management level because of their numerical minority, and that men experience similar problems when they are numerically disadvantaged, Ott (1989) argues that men and women have different experiences which are associated with the difference in their status. Ott contends that if one is from a group that has a negative stereotype, being the minority in a majority group will emphasize those negative features and make the negative image more outstanding.

Similarly, if one is from a group that is positively labelled or has high status, being the minority in a group will highlight the positive image where the status becomes more positively emphasized. In a study which Ott conducted with police women and male nurses to investigate the effects of minority experiences from gender and numerical perspectives, he found that police women had negative experiences as a minority within

a male dominated profession, but that male nurses were advantaged in the female dominated profession. Ott attributes these differences in experience as a consequence of the status of the minorities' original groups.

In his study of male nurses as a minority group in a hospital, Segal (1962) found that even though both male and female nurses had the same rank, members of both groups felt the men had a disadvantaged status position. He also found that the women perceived the men stereotypically, expecting them to do the jobs considered to be men's, and also the work which the women found unpleasant. Further, Segal states that a male nurse explained that where he thought he would enjoy his minority status within a majority group of female nurses, he was, instead, exposed to much hostility and was teased if he failed to project the manly image the females had of him (Segal, 1962).

While there are some points made in Ott's argument worthy of much credit, the general thesis cannot be accepted in its entirety, and gives rise to a number of questions. Using the general status of women as an example of a group with a negative image or low status, Ott's argument presumes that within the confines of a male dominated profession the token woman will be perceived more negatively because she comes from a group with a negative image. The minority status which the male nurse expected to enjoy and did not, is quite similar to the situation of women who move into traditionally male dominated professions and in management positions. Engineering is still highly considered a male field and the few women who have made it their career experience hostility from their male colleagues. In commerce, women in management are often intimidated by both superiors and subordinates, whereas in politics, where female

representation is low, women who have some success are generally characterized by men as "mannish". So this would suggest that Ott's thesis holds true for women in the same way that it holds true for men. However, we need to examine the data collected for this study to establish women's experiences in these male dominated professions.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

The objectives of the study were to examine the experiences of women and men working in the same professions, to determine if there were differences and if so, were they sex-related. The professions of commerce, law, medicine, university teaching, politics and the civil service were those selected for the study. These professions have only recently, since the educational reforms of the sixties, become open to women and it is important to examine women's experiences in these new roles. While it would have been much simpler to study just one profession, banking or academia for instance, I did want to try and engage a wider spectrum of the professions. The mechanisms, problems or patterns of one profession might not necessarily apply to another, and one's research is then vulnerable to the criticisms that it is too specialized, too narrowly focused or out of context. The next question is sample selection. How were the samples selected? And how representative were they? Initially I used the yellow pages of the telephone directory for compiling the original list of doctors and lawyers, where they were listed according to profession. Generally, the list for each profession had as many as 40 potential subjects in order to obtain the required 20 participants.

The six major questions were posed to each subject in the interviews using the same text on every occasion. The subsequent questions that followed, varied in design and text, depending on the subject's responses to the original questions. This permitted

comparisons not only between men and women in the same professions but also between the professions.

The study was designed to have a balanced sample of males and females with 10 women and 10 men from each of the six professions. For a number of reasons such as vacations, political debates and mass demonstrations, preparation for registration at the university, and last minute cancellations, the initial sample of 60 women and 60 men was reduced to 51 and 58, respectively. However, this did not have a serious effect on the study or on the process, as each profession was studied and analyzed individually.

In commerce, some women who were featured either in business journals, or local newspapers were identified as potential subjects. Appointments were made with heads of organizations and various institutions in order to obtain as representative a sample as possible of women and men in commerce. The interviewer sought assistance from contacts previously made, in identifying male and female entrepreneurs as potential subjects. In some instances initial contact was made on her behalf in order to facilitate the co-operation.

Four banks were selected as one area within the commercial sector, for potential subjects. These were the Bank of Nova Scotia, Barclays Bank, Barbados National Savings Bank, and the Royal Bank of Canada, where women account for the largest percentage of staff at the lower levels, and where the top structure is generally dominated by men. Of the four banks, only Barbados National Savings Bank and the Bank of Nova Scotia agreed to participate in the survey, with both institutions offering full co-operation and assistance. They both gave free access to the staff and on numerous occasions one

of them made an office and telephone available as well. Of the two other banks, one did not want to participate at the time due to a shortage of staff generated by vacations and the other refused after a brief discussion about the project with one of its highly placed male managers, who afterwards informed the interviewer that the women in his bank were happy and there was no difference in the experiences of the women and men, making it unnecessary for them to participate in the survey. But some women and men in this bank spoke informally of extreme gender differences that favoured men, particularly in management training, where they stated there were no women in the program.

To select the sample from the medical profession the interviewer contacted the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners (BAMP) and some senior doctors for assistance in finalizing the list of doctors for contact. An interview was held with an administrative officer at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to obtain schedules and assignments of doctors in order to facilitate contact with them. The interviewer also met with a female surgeon consultant at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital who introduced her to a gathering of doctors in the doctors' lounge and explained what the study was about asking them to make themselves known to the interviewer afterwards if they wanted to participate in the study. A number of the doctors in the study came from this group as a result.

In setting up the sample from the legal profession the interviewer contacted the Barbados Bar Association and the acting dean of the faculty of law at the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies in Barbados for assistance in finalizing the

list of lawyers. Some lawyers, particularly women who had a high profile in the country for various reasons, were singled out as potentially interesting subjects. The interviewer also sat around in various courtrooms on the advice of officers of the courts in order to make contact with lawyers and magistrates who were difficult to reach at their offices.

For the sample of university teachers, appointments were made with registrars of the campus, deans and department heads for their assistance in identifying potential subjects, some of whom became subjects themselves. Other department administrative assistants provided information on the whereabouts of these persons, their schedules, and basically the best time and place to contact them.

The politicians were less difficult to identify for the study, due to the nature of their high profile. In selecting that sample, care was taken to solicit subjects from the two major political parties and the new party that was formed to contest the 1991 general elections. In identifying potential subjects an effort was made to include the only female member of parliament who readily co-operated, as well as women who had been successful in the past, and those defeated in previous elections. It was much easier to find male subjects in all three categories as well those holding ministries.

For civil servants, an attempt was made to include women and men at various levels from middle management up to the level of parliamentary secretary. Assistance was sought from the head of the civil service and the ministry of labour, which had promised its co-operation in providing any necessary material, and in facilitating interviews with civil servants.

All the samples were selected in consultation with multiple sources to minimize



personal bias and to maximize the probability of a representative sample.

Once these lists were compiled, the interviewer set about the task of setting up appointments by telephone utilizing the compiled lists, first to introduce herself and offer a brief discussion of the study, and then to request their participation in the survey. This approach received the most encouraging response from most of the potential subjects identified, in each of the professions. However, not all persons contacted were able to participate in the study, but all showed great interest with the exception of one male doctor, who said he was too busy to get involved. Even in some cases where people contacted could not participate, the majority suggested other persons whom they knew would be interested and available. This was true with women as well as with the men. A number of people who offered interviews and agreed upon appointments, sometimes had to cancel or make changes because of unforeseen work situations.

The main instrument used in the study was an open-ended interview protocol. This was designed to elicit more detailed data than the standard questionnaire which often limits responses to questions. It permits comparative analysis both within and between professions.

There were six areas which the study probed which related to the way in which women and men made career choices, upward mobility rates, job satisfaction, family life and career, the structure of the professions and how jobs become gender-defined. Each of these generated a number of subsequent questions that ultimately led to a cumulative detailed response to the original question. Subjects became alarmingly involved in the questions posed particularly as they expressed their own experiences in response.

The general length of an interview was one and a half hours. This was the pattern of all interviews with the exception of two where conditions intercepted the general flow of communication, and made it difficult to remain focused. Some interviews went beyond the norm, sometimes continuing for as long as three hours. One doctor in particular, who is very vocal in union matters and in the medical association, gave the interview over a two-day period, with each period lasting about two hours.

Data for the study were collected at six specific locations which formed the natural environment for the six groups in the sample selected. An effort was made to conduct the interviews in the formal setting of the work environment. This was thought to initiate a serious approach in responding to the questions and to treat the interview with a high level of professionalism. Care was taken to attempt to conduct the interviews in similar locations with which the respondents were familiar, and to which they related professionally. As a result, only three interviews were conducted away from the respondents' place of work. Doctors were interviewed either in the medical institution in which they worked, or in their offices. One doctor was interviewed at the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners. Lawyers were interviewed in their offices and in the courts, and university teachers were interviewed on campus with the exception of one female assistant lecturer who could only give the interview at her home due to time constraints. In the case of the civil servants, commerce, and politics, all interviews were conducted in the business offices except in the case of one politician, who, in order to participate in the study, could only give the interview in his office at his residence.

The majority of the subjects were extremely accommodating with some of them

offering to meet with the interviewer where it was most convenient to her. Although in some cases appointments were not held on time due to various work situations that had developed prior to the appointed time of interview, subjects were apologetic and encouraged the interviewer to stay until the urgency was taken care of. This was the general attitude of the subjects with exception of one doctor who hurried through the interview after having set it up in a pediatrics ward, amidst screaming infants and an essentially loud staff which made it extremely difficult to conduct the interview in the normal relaxed and quiet atmosphere that had previously been achieved with all other participants.

Since the questions were open-ended, the subjects provided a vast amount of qualitative data that enhanced the responses to the specific questions. Efforts were made to make the subjects comfortable without feeling pressured. As a result, they were allowed to take whatever time they needed to respond to questions using their own style.

With the permission of the subjects, all interviews were taped. A method of labelling tapes was used to clearly identify the date of interview, the profession, and the name of the subject interviewed. In addition to this, at the beginning of each interview, a formal introduction was again made, in which the subject was identified, and a brief statement made about the study to refresh the subject's memory and to have these identifying features on tape.<sup>1</sup> This subsequently proved very useful in transcribing and coding the data.

---

<sup>1</sup> Due to ethical considerations the names of the subjects will not be used in this study or in subsequent publications.

Since most of the data was collected over two summers (1990 and 1991), follow-up mini interviews were conducted with some subjects in order to integrate changes they had made in their profession since the previous summer. One female lawyer who was interviewed while in private practice in 1990, had since become an in-house counsel for a major wholesaler/distributor. One male lawyer in private practice as well, had since successfully contested the 1991 general elections and had become an elected member of parliament. These mini interviews were deemed useful since in both instances, they projected important implications for the profession in general, and certainly in the woman's case, for women in particular.

Of the total sample 62 % (68/109) were married of whom 63 % (43/68) were male and 37 % (25/68) were female. Conversely, of the 25 % (27/109) that were single, 67 % (18/27) were female and 33 % (9/27) were male. The remaining 13 % of the total sample was made up of 9 % who were divorced and 4 % either widowed or separated. Of that 9 % (10/109), 70 % (7/10) were female.

As these statistics indicate, women often have to decide between marriage and family life and career development, hence, the statistics above. Sixty-three percent of the male doctors were married while only 37 % of the females were, and of those who were single, 67 % were female, while 33 % were male, suggesting that such gender differences may result from strategies women employ to pursue and cope in previously male dominated professions. Even among the divorced group, 70 % (7/10) were women. Marriage, divorce, and remaining single may have differential effect on the career growth of women and men and is one of the matters discussed in the interviews.

The methodology used allowed for very rich qualitative data and did not constrain the study. The large quotes of material facilitated a detailed comparative analysis of responses to questions both individually and on a gender basis. However, because of the nature of the study and the way in which the questions were designed, a quantitative dimension is achieved and in some instances substantiates or contradicts statements made by subjects. The methodology not only provides rich data for analytical purposes, but it also gives the reader that rare opportunity of making his/her own assessment of the responses to questions<sup>2</sup>. It would have been difficult to achieve this with the questionnaire method. Tables are presented where they are believed to offer clarification of data to offer a more comparative analysis. Longer quotes are provided in instances where it was felt that the respondents' emotions and sensitivity were expressed particularly vividly.

Every study has its limitations, of course; I did not study every profession, nor interview every individual; and the questions relate primarily to gender only. The findings should not be used as a generalization for the entire labour force, but instead should be seen only as representative of the professions studied.

The data collected will be presented as six chapters, one each for the six professions studied. They will be presented in the order of commerce, the civil service, university teaching, medicine, law and politics. There may be slight variations in the presentation of data but these will be explained as we encounter them. In any event all the data report on the six questions posed but the variations will reflect the peculiarities of the professions as they surfaced.

---

<sup>2</sup> The interview questions are included in Appendix 1.

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Commercial Sector**

The integration of women into the labour market in Barbados has become noticeable in the commercial sector as it has in the traditional professions. Women have successfully quelled the old fashioned stereotype that commerce and women are highly polarized. Women in commerce project a level of dynamism that is perhaps responsible for the reluctant attitude of men or even for their alleged withdrawal from the commercial sector. Women in the commercial sector are challenging men in jobs that were traditionally "male". They acquire the requisite qualification and are filling high profile positions from which they were previously excluded, notably newspaper publishing, finance management, and computer technology. But a number of concerns emerge as a result. Women identified signs of sex discrimination, both subtle and overt, male strategies to make them feel unwelcome, and male hostilities generally. In addition to these, women are concerned about the pressures associated with pursuing a career and raising a family at the same time, developing various strategies to cope with the situation. Nevertheless, they are often fatigued, and sometimes consider taking a demotion to merge the demands of family and career more harmoniously.

The sample studied (10 men and 10 women) all held management positions (or positions identified as being at the management or senior management levels) or were themselves entrepreneurial employers. Four of the women were married, four were divorced, one was single and one was separated. They all had children. Among the

women were three entrepreneurs, four managers, a personnel development officer, a development officer and a treasurer. They ranged in age from the early thirties to mid sixties.

Of the ten men, four were married, one was divorced, two were separated, two were single, and one lived with his partner. They all had children. They included a president of an organization, a director, a senior accountant, four managers, an assistant manager, and two entrepreneurs. They ranged in age from early thirties to mid fifties.

Although the entire sample seemed settled in their respective positions, more women than men anticipated further movement within their career. Even though these anticipated moves could be within the same organization, a move out of the organization was not ruled out. The direction their careers had taken for the most part, was not initially anticipated or planned. And for the most part also, economic conditions on leaving high school were largely responsible for choosing the commercial sector, not necessarily as a career, but more so as a means of finding employment. The majority of the women singled out socialization as having a significant impact on the career choice of boys and girls in general. Most of them also made their career choice according to the beliefs they held through socialization. One specified the influence of role models, while two others pointed to parents' occupation and status as important influencing factors. The development officer contended that parents generally had tremendous influence on the career choice of their children:

"I think the earliest upbringing and particularly the encouragement that is given by parents. I think also we enter into professions by default where there are opportunities that exist and doors open that you really never expected. But also the choices in school that are made for us."

One of the personnel managers also felt that the school played a great role in the career choices of girls but that generally, boys were more organized in their thoughts about career choice:

"I think that men tend to go towards the traditional choices of career. Women on the other hand are perhaps conditioned by the education system in determining what career choices they take eventually. Women tend to drift into the job market and then determine where they want to go so that when they leave school, the first thing they want to do is get a job and then determine from there where they are going. Men tend to be more well programmed as to the career they want to go into."

She uses her own situation to explain her point of view:

"When I left school I did not know what I wanted to become. I had done studies up to "A" [advanced] level and I sent off several applications and got a call from the bank. So I started in a bank. And I found that I was not making the kind of progress I wanted to make and it was because I was a woman. Because I saw men, younger than myself, come into the same bank, get into leadership positions and make strides up the corporate ladder that I was not able to make. And I reasoned with myself that I was no less intelligent than these men and therefore, it was definitely sex discrimination coming into play."

The claims adjuster, an entrepreneur herself, spoke about the policy of a commercial banker in attempting to recruit high school graduates by visiting and addressing them at school, even before graduation. She explained that through the policies he explained, it was quite obvious that the bank governed itself on sex discriminatory policies:

"When I was at school in fifth form year, they came from Barclays Bank to tell us about a career in banking and it was rather exciting. You could work your way up to the top, etc. But when he told us about salaries, he told us one set for the men and one set for the women. And I asked him why, and he said that it was because men worked for more than women. Then I asked him "am I expected to give back different change from the men? Am I going to get shorter hours than the men? Am I going to pay less busfare to work than the men? And he said 'no'. So I told him not to expect an application from me. And I never worked for the banking



system because of that. There were girls who went to school with me who applied even though they knew they would be discriminated against."

Another woman -- a manager of finance, also a qualified engineer, member of the board of directors of one of the oldest and largest insurance companies in the country, also the first Barbadian woman to qualify in engineering at the University of the West Indies, first Barbadian to actually work in engineering in Barbados -- felt that role models have an important function in the selection of a career even though the school played a significant role:

"I think you will choose your career by what you parents do, and people who are close to you. What you see them do, and how successful they might appear to you. What you may be introduced to at school."

And in expanding on the role of the school in career choice, she saw the new co-ed system as giving girls a wider career choice and points to the direct impact it has had on her as a student:

"I think that now, girls have more opportunities to do things like woodwork and draughtsmanship. I particularly got involved in what would have been considered a more male oriented career and although I had attended a boys' school to some extent, I had to go to a boys' school to do certain subjects. I wasn't exposed to those male oriented subjects like draughtsmanship, and woodwork and so on. So when I did get in to do a particular area of study, I was very weak in that area, and it was an impediment to me. So I think that now you are going to a co-ed school, girls have that opportunity.

The treasurer of the trading company, although she supported the role model syndrome, also felt that economic factors played a significant role in her situation:

"I started as a secretary. In fact, let me go back. In school I did sciences. I was to go to McGill to do dietetics but then my father changed jobs, leaving the islands and he came back to Barbados to do a post-grad degree. He went off to Jamaica for six months and during that period, I was supposed to have gone off to McGill, and he called me and said 'I

can't afford to send you this year'. So I looked around, decided 'look, I've got to go and work. I can't sit down here and do nothing'. And at that time a secretarial school was opening and I went in and did it (the diploma). I was valedictorian. And I worked at it for 14 years and I got fed up. O.k, I got married the following year, so there went McGill.

But she further explained it did not necessarily have to turn out that way:

"I was young and foolish. I wasn't thinking ahead. You know when you're telling this person you're so much in love and that sort of thing. But all this made the situation worse and I found myself two years later with a baby. Then struggling. We were both young and working for very little and wanting to give our child the best."

Men on the other hand, generally felt that career choice was largely dependent on economic factors. The majority (5) of the men felt that economic factors influenced the career direction of boys and girls. Where three of the other five men pointed to socialization two felt that the job opportunities would have played a part. One man who was the president of his organization, felt that change had taken place over the years thereby creating new factors of influence in career choice:

"Money, I think, is one factor and I think family life is another. Especially in the past, women tended to choose careers which allowed them time to develop their families and so we did not have the advantage of women entering into some of the spheres of activity because they felt that it would interfere with their responsibility at home. But that has changed. That has definitely changed now and I think that the International Women's Movement has impacted on life here. Equality of life has allowed women to make decisions based on the same reasons that men made fifty years ago, i.e., doing what they wanted to do, and therefore that is their primary reason now."

He also felt that Barbados had not made enough progress in changing the socialization patterns of girls and boys:

"I still think that in the home, the distinction still exists, and therefore the boys are prepared for certain things and the girls are prepared for other things. And when girls show interest in something that's traditionally a boy's area, there is

always concern that something is wrong. I think that that still obtains at some levels but I think it will change. Because it has changed in the workplace, *and it has changed*. They have attempted to change it in the schools, I am not sure they have succeeded, eventually it will change in the home."

But the senior accountant approximately the same age as the president, who also cited economic factors as being instrumental in one's direction gives his personal experience:

"When I first left school, I had not a clue as to what I wanted to do, really. And I got into the civil service, the post office, and into the accounting stream in there and that's where I tended to move in that direction and stayed there (in accounting) all my life. Women tended not to work at all. So when women went out to work, they tended to move towards the professions that easily picked them up, rather than necessarily wanting to be a nurse but it was a question of going into nursing because those were the only things that were available to women at that time."

One entrepreneur who had a business for a number of years felt that socialization played an important role in choosing one's career. But indicated that in the absence of formal career guidance, and the fact that poverty was common place, most people did not think of a career in any serious way. They basically wanted a job to improve their situation. Those careers that one thought of were teaching, nursing and the civil service. He also pointed out that those people who were economically disadvantaged would not have been thinking of bigger professions like law and medicine and he states:

"In my day, parents influenced the children and told them what they wanted them to do. In my case, I started teaching and then went into the civil service and picked up accounting. But I always wanted to work for myself. So when the opportunity came along, I started a small business. But it was not a case of any particular guidance I had at school like what you have today. Everybody just wanted to work."

The director expressed his need to work without having any real career ambitions at the time. He felt that it was due to economic conditions that he entered the labour force.

"I joined this company in 1962 in a junior position. And this was after a

friend recommended me to the directors. I applied in the normal way and passed one or two simple tests and then came to work in the customs department. I was eighteen years old at the time, but it was important for me to work. Just to find a job."

### **Career Aspirations**

Unlike the major professions such as law and medicine and perhaps university teaching, not many people in the business sector studied, had really planned a career in commerce. It was more a consequence of how things evolved. The sample was drawn from a generation whose career ambitions were not shaped and nurtured in the school through the scrutiny of guidance counsellors resident in the schools today. Furthermore, career goals would have been hardly discussed or developed in the home for the majority of this generation. Instead, such ambitions and/or aspirations were presumably shaped by the forces of a nation and an economy in transition.

As a result, it was much later in one's life that career goals were set and realized when one acquired a better understanding of the expanding job market and the developing widespread of career opportunities. Until this time, people in commerce started off, quite often not qualified, not knowing the direction in which they were going. One of the entrepreneurs who started out by teaching, moved into commerce and tried out general areas before finally deciding to establish a business of her own. "I taught for a while but I came out of teaching at that time because I was young, the salaries were small, and commerce offered more opportunities, so I went into commerce." Having run an employment agency, after teaching in a business school she wanted to acquire the practical experience in the commercial sector and decided to move into the hotel industry

where she subsequently became a front office recreation manager and worked there until she got married.

The treasurer of the trading company also described a career that seemed relatively unstructured. Speaking of her present organization she states:

"I started working here, and before I came here I had gone to an administrative professional secretarial school at the Extra Mural. And while doing that, I was introduced to accounting, and I found it interestingly challenging and I dropped the secretarial and from there I have been moving. I found myself o.k. I was in the right field."

And even though these women moved from job to job it became apparent they had ambitions that were not even clear to them but they were positive that there was an innate desire to go farther. This woman continues to explain:

"I was bored with secretarial work because I have the ability ... I am not belittling secretarial work, eh! It is an honourable profession and they are needed but my capabilities went beyond that. It was to get into what you wanted for the time being. But accounting is more challenging and I always did like figures, and I went to it and there, something was always happening."

For the engineer, her career started out in quite a dissected fashion until she found her real niche, but again, she too, demonstrates capabilities which castigate the traditional stereotypes attached to women, as outrageous historical untruths. This woman talks about her career development:

"I find that teachers at that time were not too much into career counselling. It's not that they deterred you, but they provided you no information. I think more so now, teachers have interest in careers and they guide you to what's called a guidance counsellor in the school who try to link you up with someone in the labour force who might know more about your career, or get that person to come in and speak to you on various careers."

This woman seemed to have shaped and nurtured her own career aspirations completely

alone and she explains further:

"My career has many prongs in that when I was at senior school, I decided to go into engineering and I did that because I was very interested in the science subjects, and I considered becoming a physicist but that was kind of impractical because I thought that was something that wasn't so practical. So I said 'well what can I do that is practical?' And I seriously went to the area because it's applied science. And it's how you apply science to solve problems and so I got heavily involved in engineering and that's how I made my choice. And I worked in engineering for many years before I decided to change career and to go into business."

This woman's career choices all seem to cut very sharply across those old traditional gender biases which quite misleadingly assert that women do not go into science or commerce. These areas have long been held up (by men, however) as being in harmony with men and as a result many women shied away from them. What is also very important is that this woman went on to excel in both engineering and commerce and sits on the board of one of the major life assurance societies in the country. In terms of reaching her career goals, she seems to have restructured her career quite differently from other women who are very committed to their career but have had to impose a self-styled ceiling on themselves to raise a family. For this financial controller, her ambitions are quite different and she explains:

"I have reached my goal in my career many times because I have set goals and attained them from the time I was probably about 23 or 24 [years of age]. So I have reached many goals, and I have also set new goals, but I haven't reached that goal yet. There are always new goals to be set. I only recently within the last month set a new goal. I want to refine my financial skills by undertaking to do some more studies in that area. It's an American designation -- financial analyst, and I want to get more involved in offshore services. I see it as something I should do as a responsible person in Barbados. I will be undertaking these studies through correspondence here in Barbados. I can't do my family that bad!!"

Men were equally as unstructured because of the economic situation that prevailed at the

time and like the women, their career aspirations evolved to reflect the changes in the wider society. One entrepreneur gives an account of his situation:

"There was no conscious effort in terms of developing one's career, because in the society at that time, you went to school, did your 'O' levels and tried to get a job. There was no guidance counsellor or career teacher to channel you anywhere. It was always a personal decision that you made afterwards to go into whatever area you thought you could make it in. But back then, your career aspiration was to get a job."

A manager of his organization and of the same age group (45-50 years) gives this view:

"Well, mine evolved a bit. I did not really see myself going into the civil service at the beginning. When you leave school everybody expects you to go into the civil service but then I realized you could make more in the private sector and I left the civil service. And it was here that you started to see things differently. You realize you could move faster and gain a lot of experience. Then I started doing accounting courses and then management. And these were all in the evenings, and as opportunities became available, you applied and that is how you moved. Then I decided that a career in business is what I wanted and so I have spent all my life in business, even though I moved around a bit. But eventually I want to get into a business of my own. I have already tried a couple of ventures but not being able to be involved full-time because I still kept my job, it was very, very, difficult. But if I get the opportunity again, my approach will be different.

Younger people today have a larger assortment of opportunities than women and men did prior to the 1960's. One's major ambition at that time stretched no farther than getting a job. One accountant stated:

"I often say now that the younger generation is probably more fortunate than the older one for the simple reason. I think that now, parents are giving their children more career guidance and they are even offering that in schools more so than they did back then. As a matter of fact, back then there was none. Schools didn't have any career guidance officers. I for one drifted into jobs without any career plan and it was only much later that I started to get serious about accounting. I did costing, customs, general office work before making up my mind to do accounting and that is only because maths was my strong subject. If I had gone into the civil service, I would perhaps have been in a better position because you can

make a good career there. But it may be too late to make that move, but this is not to say I have any regrets. It is just that at that time the civil service didn't seem to offer much and the private sector was paying more."

### **Upward Mobility**

In the business sector, upward mobility rates for men and women which seemed to have been stagnant in the pre-1960s but rapidly improved as development took place seem to be stagnant once more in some areas. Women spoke of the experiences they had both in being kept down and the guilt they sometimes experienced if they were up for promotion. The personnel manager at the publishing company felt that she and the other women who worked in the bank with her were discriminated against in favour of men, for promotion and she explains:

"... when I went to my next place of work, that bias did not come through ... that was at the university. The bias which came through there, was that people who were inclined to do their degree, were the people given the push, which was reasonable and fair. But whether it was male or female and you qualified yourself academically, you got the chances to progress up the ladder. But it was only when I came into this organization that I saw a deliberate effort to reward effort, rather than have a situation where because you are male you were given progress. But even then, when I came into the organization in 1982, it is interesting to note that there were no females at all at any level of seniority except the managing director's administrative assistant. She was the only woman who had some seniority and it was not at the department head level. I think I sort of pioneered the change."

But one entrepreneur of a large dry goods department store makes her point as an entrepreneur. She is a dynamic business woman who was at one time chairperson of the general industry of the Barbados Manufacturers Association. She was once the chairperson of the employers confederation of the garment group and at the time of the



interview, was the president of an ethnic women's association. And although in her case it cannot be clearly described as upward mobility, she compares her success in the business world as such and states:

"In some areas you get a lot of co-operation and in some areas you find again you have to work three times as hard. Let me put it this way. If you're dealing with sensible people in the business world who are mature, well you talk maturity with them and they understand you, and they respect you for it, and you don't have problems with that category of people. But when you come to a category of people who are failures in life or who have not succeeded themselves in business, and you're dealing with them, then they look at you with resentment. 'Why is this woman succeeding more than us?' so they tell you any garbage. I suppose it is their own psychological incompetence that is telling on them. But successful business people and intelligent people, you don't have problems with that lot."

Having to work three times as hard as their male colleagues . . . the same success is common to women and they generally contend that they must put in an extra effort to be able to accomplish the same success that some men can achieve even with incompetence.

This woman characterizes men and women in her employ this way:

"I think women are more dedicated to their work and they strive to have a goal. The male staff have it but they some times take a lackadaisical attitude as if it's their born rights."

The manager of the computing centre in a major bank gives her experience similarly:

"After I had my second son I came back to work. The then deputy manager called me into his office and he told me they had missed me and they were glad I was back. He had me at the time to be promoted and he asked me did I plan to have more children. I remember that distinctly, and I told him I wasn't sure. He said he needed to ask a question like that in their plans because if women have children, they have to go home if they are sick and that sort of thing, like you have to carry the child to get vaccinated. I remember him making me feel very guilty."

This feeling of guilt attacks women on two dimensions: in the first instance employers

tend to make them feel guilty if they have to take time off to look after a sick child or attend to some other matter on the child's behalf, and in the second instance, leaving the child in the care of another while they go out to earn support for that child, creates an enormous feeling of guilt. It is in this conflicting bind that women often find themselves, very often alone, as the husbands and fathers do not often share this psychological experience. Men are never asked if they plan to have children. In fact, they are generally rewarded if they do with promotions and a better salary base. This woman went on to explain the importance of her job to her domestic income and the extremes to which she went to avoid jeopardizing that job security:

"Job security meant a lot to me then because we needed the full wage. I felt very guilty, so much so, that my children attended clinic and got inoculated and I never took them once. I always had a sister, or a nephew or a brother or somebody else to do it for me. But I have never asked for the time to go and do it. So the people at the clinic never knew who my children's parents were. Both of them went to school and I never met the headmistress once. I only met the teachers because they asked where I worked, and I met them like that."

Obviously, this is an economic and psychological juncture in parenting that this woman was experiencing. On the one hand her income was important to the well being of her children, but in her mind, she was missing out on an aspect of parenting that she felt was her responsibility. Weighing the balance between economic and psychological demands, she decided to respond to the economic because she felt that was more critical. However, she made no mention of her husband's role in dealing with these problems and like the other women interviewed, she seemed to have accepted the responsibility as being fully hers. This is the experience of a woman working in a bank, a traditional female environment with a male top structure. What is the experience of women in the

traditionally male business environment? Here the personnel development officer speaks from a general perspective:

"Engineers run this company. Without the engineers there would be really no company. So in a company like this, you'd understand that there are certain limitations for women. We have one female engineer at this moment. We had one before and she wasn't going anywhere, and after ten years she left. But I think because I'm in a support area in an engineering field, there is a limit to how far I can go, and I recognize that my boss for example, is a manager but he is one year older than I am so that by the time he retires, I'm ready too. And then some where in there, there is another manager who deputises for my boss when he is on leave, so he might slip in there eventually."

The manager of finance, speaks about her experience in the engineering field as well:

"I was working in engineering for a while here in Barbados. I worked in the government electrical engineering department where my function was to oversee that electrical installations throughout the island were in good stead and there were no hazards and that they were adequate in terms of how they were installed and controlled."

How was she perceived in this male bastion, and did she received the co-operation that any new employee would be granted?

"Not very well. They did everything to get me out as quickly as possible. And I came out after spending about two years in there. Around that time, I got married and had a baby so I taught for a while where I was living. After I had gotten that child to a certain stage, I decided to go back into the engineering field and I went to work with an electrical firm. This time I did the electrical installations. I went into this firm more like a quantity surveyor type of person. I found the accounting part of it interesting because it was a challenge."

This strategy of intimidation is often used by men against women in non traditional jobs. It can be viewed as a reaction to a perceived or imaginary threat or it can be viewed as a message of deterrence for women entering a "male profession". But from a more general perspective, this finance manager talks about the things women must keep in

mind in order to succeed in the engineering field, and the challenges that they face:

"In engineering in Barbados, upward mobility is limited anyhow, in any career. There aren't many places you can go, and there is a small network and everybody knows you. So if you want to move around too much, you become known for rolling and not collecting any moss. But I don't think it is any worse for females than it is for males. I think the difference for a male and a female is that the female has to be competent. The male could be slightly incompetent and get by. I'm absolutely sure about that, if he shows an area of incompetence. As a female, it seems to be one that shines through and gets talked about and so on, more than a male. But there are some males who, good in some areas but they have areas that everybody knows are weak, but it doesn't hold him back as much. It doesn't overpower the other areas of competence. But with a female, you have to have a higher level of competence."

As a woman, you must always have a higher level of competence to have the same opportunity as the male. But this discriminatory policy is not peculiar to the labour force, it is the persistence of a similar discriminatory policy practised in the education system where girls writing the exam of differentiation known as the 11-plus for high school selection must earn higher marks than the boys to obtain a place in the same schools. And perhaps this is where the female drive for excellence really starts to show up. They must work harder to excel and it is this same excellence in performance by women with which men afterwards seem to find difficult to compete.

Naturally the practice in the school system is not rewarding merit, it is a glaring discriminatory practice against females and is extended into the labour market where men are given title to positions of power and privilege. What does this do for the males in society? It encourages mediocrity in the school and rewards it in the job market thereby creating high levels of tension and frustration for those women who persistently refuse to accept such practices of sex discrimination. Despite these prejudices which women in

the workplace encounter, they sometimes have an additional challenge from other women who try to impede their progress. The advertising manager speaks of the reaction of her staff when she was promoted to the position of manager:

"The staff was the same, but it was just a bit hard. The thing is, I was the first woman to occupy this position. I got great cooperation from the men but the women were a little bitchy at times and they started to get nasty. They knew I was capable of doing the job. I had acted in the position when the manager retired in October and I acted until June the following year. Then I was appointed in July. So in as much as I had covered all that ground and did all that work, I found that it didn't go down well with a lot of women in here. I find a lot of us do not like to see other women excel for one reason or the other. And I don't know if it's a matter from way back when women were looked at to just do certain jobs or what have you. At the beginning it was difficult but at present I get the fullest cooperation. Their behaviour toward me made me stronger and it made me see my job as a challenge and I'm glad it happened."

Even among women, ambitious women seem to be put through a test to see if they are suitable for a particular promotion but it is an experience that men do not seem to have with other men or with women.

Men's reaction to upward mobility rates for males and females was mixed. The director of the import/distribution company gives his own experience:

"After working in customs for three years, the costing clerk had resigned and I was promoted to the costing and invoicing department. After four years in the job, there was a vacancy in the pharmaceutical department and because I had assisted the manager, when he resigned, I was offered and accepted the job of manager of the pharmaceutical department. That meant I had to visit doctors in private practice, and the hospitals in Barbados as well as in the Leeward and Windward Islands. I also doubled as office manager where I did most of the hiring of staff. Much of the progress I made in the company was a result of working in various departments and even while I worked in a given department, I always looked around to see difficulties and problems in other areas and tried to solve them without any prompting from the older directors. It was a question of using my own initiative and being as versatile as possible."

It was at the older directors' retirement in the 1970s that he became a director and remains with the company to this day. He is also a shareholder of the company:

"By the time I became a director, I had accumulated a considerable amount of knowledge in customs, the importation of product, clearing of product, costing, billing, warehousing, pharmaceuticals, as well as finance."

The accountant gave an analysis of why men tend to progress more than women and the factors that are considered in such decisions.

"In the past, men tended to move through quicker than women because there were more men and they seemed to be more oriented in terms of staying with it. Women tended to come into the work force and drop out a year or two and sometimes never came back. So I think that generally, employers put the emphasis on moving men up and training men because they thought that was a long term investment. But nowadays, I observe certainly in big countries women are competing shoulder to shoulder with men for positions because they are getting as qualified."

Women are becoming as qualified and sometimes more qualified than men but their experience in the labour force is quite unlike the experience of men. This is observed in traditional female job centres as well as in male professions as indicated earlier in banking and in engineering. In the newspaper industry the role of women has improved tremendously particularly in terms of senior positions. And the president of one of the local newspapers indicates how change has taken place to promote equality between men and women.

"We deal with persons. Originally yes, it was difficult. In fact, there used to be two salary scales but no longer. What created the change? I think awareness. I'm not trying to gloat but I think if you have aware management, then you can anticipate what's happening and deal with it rather than find yourself having to cover ground. A personnel manager who is very up-to-date, and very aware, and who advises me on the way to go. There are more women employed here than men. The editorial at least has to be two to one, production is one to two. Sales is about equal,

accounts is nine to one and circulation is two to one.

In terms of productivity, he felt that for women, it was generally high but admitted that there are still some female slackers. However, in terms of reliability they were good.

"You can really depend on a woman to see something through to the end but the guys will short circuit you and leave." Why the tendency now to lean towards having more women in the newspaper industry, once a male enclave? He continues to explain:

"From my experience I prefer female reporters because of their interest in detail which is greater than the men's therefore accuracy is great. In sales, I prefer women because they have demonstrated that they do better than men in sales. In accounting also. So generally speaking, most of the time we find that women will do better in some of those traditional jobs. Sometimes when we do a short list after we have advertised and we interview people, many times there are no men on that short list absolutely none. Sometimes we say we must find a man so we can at least make a comparison."

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction in the business sector is defined differently depending on the person involved, and it has been defined as diversely as the sample itself, and its varying backgrounds. The personnel development officer went through a series of appointments before she settled in her current post. However, she seemed to have enjoyed the majority of them, and indicated the changes or transfers made, related to other things that were taking place in her life. After having taught for a number of years, and after returning to Barbados from Canada where she lived for sometime, she took up a position with the YMCA:

"I was the first female general secretary in the YMCA in the world, so as far as everybody is concerned, I have reached the zenith, so to speak. But I did it ( a degree in law) because I was going through some problems

with my own situation and I knew that I would have had to support myself and I knew that the YMCA was a good organization to really find yourself and work with people and enjoy yourself. If I ever enjoyed my work it was in the YMCA. But I also knew the 'Y' wasn't giving me enough. It was like the 'Y' was something to do with my left hand, I enjoyed it. I knew it from top to bottom, everything. Because when you're at the YMCA you have to be a financial controller, an administrator, personnel manager, counsellor. You did everything."

For the female claims adjuster, she worked in many areas before taking up that position.

While in her present job, she is establishing her own business in the candy industry. And in talking of her experience in the insurance business she points out:

"It is a very challenging job. We deal with claims. If your house was burned, or you had a flood or a hurricane or a burglary, we are called in and we determine liability for the insurance company. We determine rather, the loss as prescribed under the policy which you have, and if it does, the extent of the insurer's liability. And it's challenging. You never know from day to day what is going to happen. I enjoy the work."

The flexibility of this job and the interaction with the clients which it provides are very important to this woman and she also enjoys the fact that it takes her out of the office.

She continues:

"Funny enough, I don't enjoy sitting at this desk. I get more out of being out there, dealing with people and being able to be one step ahead, and analyze what their motives are and things like that. This job exposes me to men and women, the lowly, the mighty, all kinds. It's one place if ever you could become corrupt, you could become corrupt in days, and people have tried to bribe me with all sorts of things."

One of the young female entrepreneurs was in the supermarket business with her husband and although she readily admits it is a lot of hard work and sacrifice, she enjoys the feeling of having her own business:

"At first, I thought it would be a bit difficult in dealing with the people and so on, but I never really felt that I won't do it. I just said I was going to try. I gave up my job. At first it was a bit hard. I knew working from



8-4 or 9-5, that's it and you leave, you go home. But you come into this business now and it's a 24-hour job. At first it was horrible, but I got accustomed to it now and I really enjoy it. In those early years, I would be here all day and still at night too. But now as we grow, I have people to look after certain things, so that I can have a break."

Although she states that she and her husband look after the daily operations of the business, she explained how a very clear division of labour upholds the success of the business. In analysis, one has the impression that they have identified their individual strengths and weaknesses, and have apportioned unto themselves those areas of responsibilities compatible with the strengths identified thereby reducing the chances of having to deal in areas where their weaknesses render them vulnerable. Having worked in the business sector previous to this venture, she had accumulated knowledge as a stock clerk, in payroll procedures and general office procedures. How was she able to utilize this knowledge as a young female entrepreneur?

"I was able to set up my own office, do my own payroll, everything up to a certain part of the accounting, I can do. We haven't had any training as such coming into this business, but being able to set up the office, and then talking to people who were in it before."

The success of the business can be measured by the extent of its expansion. The business has grown from a small scale to a large scale supermarket, employing more than 35 people. She admits that initially, relatives were her only patrons, but as time passed her approach to business brought her loyal customers. How does she do this?

"With prices, and they get personalized service. If you don't know me as such, you won't know who is the boss in here. I go on the floor, take up baskets, push trolleys, whatever needs to be done. That is one of the ways through which we attract a lot of people."

Her husband is on the road most of the time taking care of that area of the

business. At the same time, he is supervising and participating in the construction of a much larger building that will eventually house all three locations of the present business, under one roof, and thereby improve service and facilities for the customer's comfort.

One banking officer at the management level, spoke about her situation in the bank and the conflict she experiences between her desire to move on and the limitations which the banking system imposes on her. She also spoke of the subtle discrimination women experience and the way in which it militates against their level of job satisfaction.

"I think that right now, if I had the funds to support myself, I would give it up without having any planned leave, and would probably go off and study. Take a couple of years, and plus I don't think this bank is the beginning and end of my existence, nor do I think that the world is limited to Barbados. And I find we have a tendency here to be a little narrow minded in the bank, generally. And a lot of people including myself could use a little bit more exposure. In fact these things that we make a big thing of are probably nothing overseas."

But given all that she has said about the system, she feels that her present area of work is enjoyable and its hectic pace retains her interest even though it also makes it very difficult to pursue any studies that may prepare her for higher level management positions:

"I think too, that with a job like this, because accounting forms a major part of the bank, I find that it is always hectic. You always have to be involved in something and it's interesting that way. But by the time you finish at 4:30 you are ready to go home. And by the time you get home, you think, 'Oh God, I don't think I can make it to studying anything else now'. But sometimes, you have to sit down and decide."

In view of the fact that the banking system generally has an over representation of women at the lower levels given the composition of its top structure, it is quite obvious that even in this traditional female environment, women still experience some level of

discrimination.

The woman engineer who became a financial controller talks about her level of job satisfaction in what was known as and still is, to a great extent, a male profession:

"I think I had quite a bit of job satisfaction in engineering, but there was always something in me that felt as though I should be doing something more or contributing more or whatever. I don't know if that is related to job satisfaction or if it is related to wanting to make sure you make a contribution. But I love engineering. I think if you love what you have studied, you feel a sense of gratitude. And although I have changed my career, I still have this great sense of gratitude in engineering for giving me this strong foundation and even the exposure. I worked in it for six years and got 'O' levels in engineering. I think it did lots for me. And job satisfaction again, in the management area and in the finance area, it's profound, because I'm into numbers, but I'm not into numbers for themselves. I always wanted to know what can I apply them to do. So I have both things on my side now. I'm into numbers and I use those numbers to achieve certain things in terms of management of the organization. So I'm very happy in what I do. I really get a lot of job satisfaction. That's quite probably why, growing up, and when I got married and so, I said my family comes first, and now I say to myself, although I would like it to come first, and in my mind I would love to be able to go and tell everybody my family comes first, I really spend a lot of time in my career. I do, because I enjoy it, I do.

Are the men equally happy in their jobs? The director of the import and distribution company spoke of his rise up through the company and the job satisfaction he still enjoys at the level of director:

"I have made lots of progress over the years, joining the company as a junior and I am now a marketing executive. I have no regrets. And I accumulated a lot of knowledge not only in Barbados, but by travelling to other Caribbean countries and dealing with international companies as well. I deal with major companies in the U.S., Canada, and England. I have gained a lot of experience and it all helps me to enjoy what I am doing."

The accountant who is also an entrepreneur, relates job satisfaction to the scope of opportunities available within his organization. Considering the size of the company he

did not think there was much being offered to employees, and for him personally, he stated:

I would like to go home now. Like I said because of the lack of scope here, I don't think I have really a long way to go in this organization. I probably will do the job if they keep me. I will probably stay where I am until I retire. If I stay here that is what I will be. You've got to find the right thing at the right time and you know, that's not the easiest thing to do. I have had one or two ventures, and I have not been at all encouraged by them. That is why I'm still here. Plus too, I enjoy my accounting work because math has always been one of my strongest areas at school and I have no problems with that now."

One of the other entrepreneurs who has been in and out of his own business over the years, declared that in terms of security and benefits and sometimes a bonus and some autonomy, he enjoyed a high level of satisfaction but nevertheless, wanted a change:

"In that job, I was no longer moving and while I was relatively happy there, I felt I could enjoy myself more if I changed jobs or even if I went into my own business, which is something I always had in mind. So eventually, I decided it was time to get out and try my hand for myself. But what really deterred me was giving up my job entirely. So I got my business set up and had someone run it for me. It is doing quite well, and I'm happy with it. There are a lot of small businesses developing now and people seem to be more serious about working for themselves. Something they never did before."

## **Family Life**

The family life patterns of women and men in the private sector reflect some similarities. However, what seems to be one of the main distinguishing features is age. The men and women from the sample in the medical and legal professions for the most part, were between the mid-twenties to their mid-forties, compared with people in the commercial sector who ranged in age between the mid-thirties to their to mid-sixties. Perhaps this can be attributed to the fact that the study was aimed at men and women at the management level and the same thing would have been obtained with the senior civil servants. Reaching the top levels in a private organization would be a more drawn out process in these two sectors in terms of position, hence, the age group differentiation. On the other hand, family life seemed to affect women in this sector differently than it does in medicine and law. (Here again, there may be some variation in the approach to data presentation given the fact that the experience of entrepreneurs may differ slightly from the experiences of those employed by others.)

Both men and women in the commercial sector acknowledged that there is differential effect of family life on their careers. The commercial sector is one of the first areas of the labour market that women seemed to penetrate, despite this change, the barriers to their equal participation and competition still revolve around their domestic responsibilities, particularly if they are raising a family. And this seems to occur in a way that men do not understand or their perception of it is quite different from how women articulate that experience. Women often find themselves at crossroads in terms of career development and raising a family, and the decision to choose between the two

or to merge them, in some cases generating enormous conflict.

The personnel development officer spoke about making her choice and the role of her children in that decision. Having been accepted in the management training program at one of the commercial banks, she decided against it because of the long hours banking generally entailed:

"I came back to Barbados with one child almost two years old, and the other five. And I was concerned that these long hours that I see people working in the bank, what would happen to my children. My husband at the time was in the newspaper business so it was a case of long hours. So what would happen when I have to be in the bank and he is working. So it would have presented a lot of difficulties, so I thought the YMCA would have been excellent because I would have been able to pick up the children from school."

Picking up the children from school has become not only a social norm for mothers, but also the responsibility of mothers. This is one of the direct results of women going into the labour force in significant numbers and the disappearance of the extended family system. Consequently, mothers have had to take on the responsibilities which the extended family previously assumed. How do they cope with picking up the children from school at 3:00 o'clock? It seems to be becoming an accepted arrangement where children are able to join their parents at their place of work until the work day is over. In many cases, home work is done on the premises. Employers seem not to oppose this practice because there are very few options open to these women. The personnel development officer who eventually worked with the YMCA talks about how this was used as an incentive during her interview for the position:

"when I went for the interview that's how they sold the job to me. They actually pursued that because they knew that I had two children and they said 'you know, at the YMCA there would be no problem. And so true,

it turned out that way. So that's one of the reasons I went there. I knew I could look after my children."

But even though this seems to be a genuine interest in the applicant and the flexibility it offered to her children, one cannot help but notice the subtle assumption that the working woman with young children does experience such problems and at the same time, the interviewer would have been acknowledging that this responsibility does indeed fall to the woman.

The claims adjuster made her career decisions around her children and changed jobs to accommodate their schedules:

"I told myself I wanted a job which would have given me flexibility to do things with my children. Pick them up after school when they should have been picked up, because when I was in the last job, it was really kind of a hassle. Because I had to get to work at 8:00 a.m., their school doesn't start until 9:00 but they had to get to school, in order for me to get to work at 8:00. And then I had to use my lunch hour to pick them up, and it was rushing. So I decided to go into the insurance field. Selling life insurance satisfied me from the point of view that it gave me the ability to choose the hours that I wanted to suit my life style, and it was also a way of earning an income."

But this woman had to consider other factors as well. The flexibility of the job was attractive because she could structure her hours of work around her children's demands on her time. However, she was mindful in considering also potential sexual harassment on the job as this was still considered a male domain. She gives her account of it:

"There were those who came before us who made a mess of the scene (women selling insurance). So when you saw a woman selling life insurance it was like 'aha, boy I got a date tonight!'" So much so, that I never really had evening appointments. I didn't want to work at night because I had small children. But in those days women and night appointments sounded wrong. So I kept away from it ... women have the ability but they have a disadvantage. Unless they are going to be strictly career women, they have a problem because you have to think of picking

up the children, you've got to think of getting home and fixing a meal. So therefore, women have got to get home by a certain time to put on the pot. So it is obvious that she cannot progress in the manner in which he can because of the other responsibilities that she has and he isn't prepared to share either."

To consolidate her argument, she spoke about one of her female friends, a lawyer, who once told her she was leaving her practice and going home. And on enquiring why she was going home, her friend explained 'well, I've discovered I'm not a good lawyer, I'm not a good wife, and I'm not a good mother. So I gave up the job so that I can try to be good at one of the other two". Since then however, she has noticed that her friend has gone back out to practice.

For the engineer/teacher/financial controller/entrepreneur, she seems to describe the relationship between family and career in much the same way as some of the men did, e.g. the president and editor-in-chief of the publishing company. Responding to the effect family life has had on her career and her career aspirations she adamantly states:

"I think it is better to put it the other way. How does my career affect my family life. And I know you tend to say, in your mind 'my family comes first'. When I look at the time I spend, my career comes first. I spend more time with it. I mean I don't care what I say, that is words. If I really have to evaluate it, I spend more time on my career and career related things. I help with the computer school. I also have a little business I have to give some time to. I hardly have any time with my children. I think in terms of time, I hardly do any cooking. You have a helper and she does the cleaning and some cooking. I hardly do anything around the house. I don't even spend that much time with the children and their homework. They are self-motivated and self-reliant."



This is a departure from the traditional and certainly even from the direction women are going in today. She does not seem to even attempt to juggle the two -- family life and career. Obviously, she focuses very much on her career which she describes as glamorous. And she seems to have no interest in career ceilings -- glass or self imposed.

The supermarket proprietor, gives a brief account of her situation at home.

"I don't have a family and I don't know what will happen because I had a problem so I don't know. And the years have slipped by so fast, so I don't even think about it anymore."

The years do seem to slip by very fast particularly for career women who are struggling with the development of a career while raising a family. But perhaps the vocabulary chosen "slipped by" seems to indicate that these years have virtually gone by unnoticed. This is precisely women's experience when they are trying to progress professionally and postpone having children for a while in order to achieve their goal. Often, they ultimately forfeit having children. And if in one's own business, family life can have an even greater impact.

"some people say to me 'I don't see how you can do it. You don't have any social life'. There are lots of things you can't do when you have a business. For instance I would like to go on holiday in August, but I can't because this is our busiest period. So if you go into business and say 'I'm going to have this time, forget it. After Christmas it's a slow period through January, February. But even then, I would like to take four weeks, but I can't. I'll just take two. I usually go overseas. I can't spend it at home, otherwise I will end up back here so I always have to make a point to go away. But only one of us can go at a time. We used to have a few weekends together and if it's something to do with the business in Miami or somewhere, we go together and that can only be a week end, never a week or two together."

The manager of advertising, a single parent, states her experience:

"It is much harder on the women because as the career woman, you still

have to go home and you're expected to do your chores. In the case where women have children, they are still expected to be their mummy. And I think this is where men must learn to be more supportive of the women, where they can share the chores. I come home, I have to cook, I have to clean, I have to wash. And we are still looked upon in that way. But I think it's harder on the woman because the men still go and hang out. They still have their domino night, their girls' night, and all those nights. I think it makes it much harder on career women. I can tell you, last month I was finishing off my general management at UWI and it meant I was leaving here on evenings and rushing to school, and then I still had to go home at night and do chores, clean, wash, etc."

Cooking, cleaning, and washing, all very time-consuming chores routinely remain the responsibility of the woman, even when the husband is motivated to share responsibilities in the home. How did she manage as a single parent when her son was very young?

"Thank God I had my mum to help me, but what I would do, I would try to plan. Like now, whenever I leave here tonight, I'm going to do my laundry. But when my son was small, as I said, my mum helped me a lot and she was there for me to lean on. And even with me working long hours, sometimes I don't leave here until one in the morning, depending on what's happening. She was there."

Men do seem to have a different kind of experience and for the most part, seem not to understand the complex situation of women who try to balance a career and family simultaneously. However, the president of the publishing company projected a very modern attitude as an employer and acknowledged a clear understanding of the difficulty career women experience:

"I still think that there is differential effect of family life on women and men's careers. I think that women still have it very hard in their careers as a result of family life. I have in the editorial department a man and a woman who share the top position -- associate manager and editor, which is the most senior position in the editorial department. They were appointed jointly, and looking at their domestic life, there have been more problems for her in dealing with the job.

Of course, there are more problems for her in dealing with the job. And these problems

are brought on primarily because of her other job - that of raising a family. So even if her male colleague had children it would not necessarily impact upon his job in the same way because again, he has a wife on whom the responsibility of raising the family would likely fall. The president continues:

"In fact, I met with her only yesterday to help deal with the problem because she's a single parent and he's married but no children yet. One of her children is three and one is eight. So they are at school. Her husband is overseas so she's virtually a single parent. And she therefore has to have two babysitters because her job requires night work. So the night babysitter is on until she comes in, which sometimes is very late. Last night I left here at midnight and I left her here, o.k? And she's saying that it is really very hard, and she's not sure she won't prefer a demotion, just to fit into her domestic situation until her husband comes back or until the kids grow up. And she's very good, but she said it is really hard balancing it. Her son has to come in here and do homework, that kind of thing."

Having the full responsibility of two young children must certainly make it very difficult for her to effectively cope with her career, particularly since it is in the newspaper business. In spite of paying two babysitters she still finds it very hard. And perhaps this is because there are many areas of parenting that do not come under babysitting, which only a parent can provide. Therefore she must still deal with a number of other important responsibilities. And what coping strategy is she considering imposing on herself? Like many of the women in medicine, she is considering imposing a ceiling on her career advancement. As a matter of fact this may be more of a psychological trauma for her as she already advanced up the corporate ladder, and is now thinking of coming back down to a lower level. This suggests therefore, that she would have to deal with having proven her capabilities and then being physically and perhaps psychologically unable to function at that level, due to the demands of her other job of parenting. This further suggests, that

like many other mothers (known to be very good in their jobs), she has placed her family in a higher priority.

And to further demonstrate his understanding of the plight of the career mother of young children, he was quite open about the domestic role he plays at home.

"I am married to a career woman so we share equally. I mean I bake, I cook .. I've always had that approach even with my ex-wife. She would tell you I did not grow up doing those things and I had to learn. I'm fully independent. I do the washing at home, all 100%. We understand there has to be sharing. She does about 90% of all the cooking. I do all the baking."

But he also spoke about when his children were very young and the impact his career had on his family life. And this is generally the manner in which these two roles impact on each other for men. For women it is usually how their family life affects their career, therefore, there is a gender difference in the ordering of priorities here. Where women usually experience a biological dilemma in trying to establish themselves firmly in their career before having children, or experience a physical and psychological trauma if they try to do both at the same time, this man has silently suffered a similar trauma in establishing his own business at the same time he had a very young family. And reflectively, he does seem to regret the parental role it has denied him.

"I really wasn't around you know Phyllis. I never did homework with my children. Never. I never sat down a night and did homework with my kids. This job never allowed me to do it. And it hurt me very, very badly, because I had no nights that I could do it. And any time that I was home, I was so tired I couldn't pay any attention. So they grew up without me really knowing them as well as I should. I wasn't really, in my view, a good father. I was a good provider, but I wasn't a good father in terms of being around to do things and so on. I regret that very much."

This really seems to reiterate the same sentiments of parenthood articulated by the female

manager of the computer center. But more specifically, it is the first and only time in the study where a man has spoken in terms of experiencing that guilt trip which women so often experience. This guilt trip seems to have captured both the psychological and emotional attention of this man. And what is more, he feels he has been denied experiencing fatherhood in the true sense, while at the same time, he seems to feel he has denied his children a very important part of childhood. What is quite noticeable here is that although this man's role in the home at that time was quite consistent with the general pattern in the wider society, as a father, he regrets the denial of those aspects of fatherhood of which his career seemed to have cheated him. The manager of the computer centre, recognizing the importance of her income to the family budget, was also forced to allow her career to deny her important aspects of parenting.

Another male entrepreneur also acknowledged that women generally carry the burden of raising a family and all the other domestic responsibilities:

"There is a great deal of pressure when both people in the family are going out to work, particularly when there are children involved. Most of these responsibilities fall on the mother, so it becomes very difficult for her. This will call for sharing all the traditional roles so as to make it easier for your wife. Marriage is a partnership anyway and if it is unequal, it will create problems and will not work out. But because of the traditional perception, I still think that family life has a greater impact on my wife's career than it has on mine, because she does more for the children and she does more in terms of domestic responsibilities, even though I share."

The senior accountant expressed a different view from the other men. He states:

"For men, I think family life plays a significant part on their careers in that it gives the sense of responsibility and the need to get ahead so they can earn enough to maintain the family. For women, I think that the fact that people want to, again, earn enough money so they can live comfortably, is forcing women into the labour force and that in their own

right, women are becoming more conscious of their own worth and I think that they are going out there and pushing to do just as well as the men."

Although this man speaks from a general perspective, he seems aware of the dilemma which career women with children experience. And he alludes to the general claim often made (even in this study) that Barbadian men do not generally do domestic chores in their living arrangements:

"I get the impression that men in such places like North America tend to take a far greater role in terms of the home, in bringing up children, etc. They tend to take a far greater role than they do in the Caribbean because, first of all, women tended not to work. Secondly, the stress on women and the whole family unit is different. In Barbados, you usually had the extended family, an aunt or grandmother, but that is no longer evident in today's society. So the need for families to get enough to survive on, has forced women out into the world of work, and it has forced men, I think, to take on some more responsibility within the household."

It is often argued by feminist writers and others, that these additional responsibilities that men have taken on, generally reflect only a minimal change for them. And when this is calculated in terms of time, it amounts to no more than a few additional minutes per day. And perhaps this is why this man has spoken in general terms but has avoided identifying his role, and how his family life is really affected by his own career.

The director of the import/distribution company stated that his position in the home, like the president of the publishing company, was more unusual than the position of the average man as it is articulated. He states that "I am seen as very, very domesticated in the home and there is very little that I cannot do in the house. I did many, many things that females usually do and it never bothered me. In fact, I even enjoyed doing them."

## **The Vertical Structuring of work**

The private sector of the Barbados economy projects many divisions and levels. At the outset, it should be stated that economic power in the private sector is held principally by the white minority population. Therefore, in discussing the hierarchical structure and the situation of women in the private sector hierarchy, it must be clearly understood that developmental progress in these terms has not really entered the debate in any profound way. This does not mean that women are not highly placed in some instances. Rather, it is to explain that women's success in commerce seems largely to be the consequence of individual endeavour and ambition and not of any concerted effort launched by any women's groups or government policy. The major debate concerning the transfer of sharing of positions of power in the commercial sector, is fundamentally linked to and dominated by theories of race and class position and not to theories of gender or sex roles. Thus, in Barbados, women's role in social and economic development, particularly at the private sector level, has not become an issue of national significance largely because the country is still at the stage of struggling with social and economic development and racism.

Academically, women in Barbados are very well qualified, with the acquisition of management skills. Cave Hill Campus, Extra Mural Department of the University of the West Indies, provides an important opportunity for continuing education and women are responding in significant numbers. Similarly, the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (BIMAP), one of the first local institutions to respond to the need for qualified men and women in management (to work not only in the private sector but in

the public sector as well), has been turning out women in large numbers with diplomas and certificates in management training. Women have been taking full advantage of these new opportunities. One of the senior instructors at BIMAP explained the role of this institution in preparing women for the corporate world:

"I feel a sense of pride when I look in the newspapers and I see some of the women who have gone up the corporate ladder and there to read in fine print, they have attended a management course in human resources at BIMAP or they have done BIMAP something. I feel good about that. And in recent years, last year and this year, the top awards went to women -- the overall efficiency award, and the most outstanding diploma student. Before, I would say 90% of the time the efficiency award was won by a man. But now, it's like the women are really coming out on their own. Even when you see the students out there in the yard, they are mostly women. And they are doing the management program."

Women are approaching their role in the labour force from many angles and are equipping themselves with the necessary credentials that would place them on an equal footing with men, academically. They are no longer laid back and prepared to take second place as this woman explains:

"I think they will be up there and in some cases beyond. They will be passing the men in that area. I don't know if this is because some have not entirely given up, but I think that men are almost feeling threatened because women are not prepared to sit back and say 'now look, you go ahead because perhaps you will make a better manager than I would'. Instead, they are going in and saying 'you can do it, I can do it maybe twice as good as you can'. I think what happens in some cases is that women have to do that extra something to prove that they can do it, because everybody is looking to see what they can do. So you probably have to put that little extra thing. And you will find that there are quite a few women who started their own business or small company. You've got pockets of small businesses that are run by women and they are meeting the challenge out there and it augers well for the future."

Having to put in that little extra something in order to achieve the same position as men is a constant reminder that women are operating in a society that still practices gender



inequality. And as the insurance claims adjuster points out "to get promotion in a job it means you've got to be the best ...." Women who move up the corporate ladder are often scrutinized to determine if they measure up against the men. And even when they are judged as being superior, they move no faster, and often not as fast as their male counterparts. This woman continues to explain how women's role has been changing over the years:

"Times have changed and opportunities that were not open to women in the past are now open to women. So it's up to them to grab them and run with them. For example, this year among the Barbados Island Scholars, there was a girl who was going off to do mechanical engineering. Now when before in the history of Barbados would you have seen a woman go to do mechanical engineering? I think that is one of the problems with us. We have concepts of what men can do and what women can do."

Obviously, this woman is referring to the old stereotypical approach to doing things. With the emergence of smart, bright, and dynamic women in the labour force, that stereotype has become very misleading particularly as it applies to men. Women continue to demonstrate superb capabilities and men are perceived to be retreating from this situation which they seem to find uncomfortable.

The personnel manager of the publishing company gives a very clear scenario of her experience after reaching the management level:

"I think I've earned my stripes now, right? I think there is a lot of respect for me in this organization. I think when I speak people listen. When I give advice, they will consider it good advice and follow it willingly. But it was not easy. But I think that it was through persistence, and through really being right a lot of the time. So it was the question of being confident through sheer experience and sheer demonstration of knowledge and competence. But people started to come around. The people that used to say 'she doesn't know what she's talking about', now they openly said to me and said in a forum at the same management meetings, 'one thing for sure, she's good at her job. She knows what she's doing'. That was

my greatest achievement in this organization."

This woman has passed the test of scrutiny and is now respected not only for her position but for her knowledge and competence in her job. And although she has received praise in an important forum with her peers, one must still see the blatant sex discrimination in treatment that this public recognition really is. It sets her aside from the other managers (all male), not because of her knowledge and competence, but because she has received such treatment in the presence of other managers whose knowledge and competence are assumed and taken for granted. But for the woman, a public statement was deemed necessary because she is obviously not one of their kind. And she herself has failed to see it in this light, as she lauds this public acceptance in the traditional "male club" as her greatest achievement. And perhaps her following remarks may explain why she chose to perceive these remarks the way she did. She continues:

"There are people who used to put me down, and who used to hold private conferences with my male colleagues and planned strategies to destroy me during a meeting. That is what they used to do. Call little meetings in the corridors and plan how they are going to deal with me. How they are going to frustrate me. One person told me that 'I told so and so that I was going to make you cry'. So that was a goal of one of my male colleagues -- to make me cry. It was that fickle. And a lot of it was male insecurities. I was accused of being power hungry, I was called the "Iron Lady", all manner of unpleasant things they said about me. After a while, I learned not to be angry with them but to try to understand where they were coming from. In those days, when I got angry with them and retaliated, my life became more difficult. And then through training and exposure, I learned that they needed sympathy rather than anger."

They were going to destroy her. They were going to deal with her. They were going to frustrate her. They were going to make her cry. All these have become well known male strategies of intimidation against women who are ambitious enough to want to excel in

their profession because excelling implies reaching the top and the top has been a male bastion for generations where women have always been perceived as intruders. The persistent women become a threat to this structure and as a consequence, they are branded as power hungry. But does this not in itself characterize the men in the very same state? Had they been satisfied and not power hungry (still), they would perhaps have been more receptive to women. And as a matter of fact, their level of power hunger surpasses that of women by far, since after generations of being in these top positions they are still not satisfied. They still seem to be very power hungry.

Another woman at the senior management level of a children's centre gives a comparative analysis of her role at this level in England, where she lived for a number of years, and her experience in Barbados. In responding to the way in which management reacts to her as senior manager at meetings, she states:

"... the management structure in England is so different than it is here. This is not meant to be disparaging in any way about what goes on in Barbados, but in England, you're expected to manage and get on and do it. And I think that people relate to you first and foremost as a manager or whatever position you're in. I'm not quite sure about here. I really am not. I sometimes come out of a meeting thinking 'I really hope they were seeing me not as a woman, but really as a manager'. And I don't know which comes first though. Whether it's the fact that men see you as a woman and therefore as interaction goes on you get so accustomed to that, you fall into that role or what!"

This is a conflict that women in management experience. A conflict that seems to escape men. But socialization has long dictated (no matter how erroneously so) that men are more suited to be managers and therefore they are perceived as veterans in those positions. The man and the manager become one and the same, so this conflict would be foreign to men. And how do they feel about being in these leadership positions? One

manager of a small business stated:

"Men tended to demonstrate more leadership or aspirations for leadership roles. Compared with the women, they applied for more of these positions. In any case, a few years ago, these positions would have called for certain qualifications which meant, it would have excluded a lot of women since they would have had to go off and study. And their socialization would have had them thinking differently. They saw themselves primarily as homemakers looking after their families and not going off somewhere to study. But all that is changing now. There are quite a number of women now who are moving into positions which, 10 years ago, were all occupied by men. Women are now fully qualified. The women are qualifying much faster than the men and some of the men are dropping out of university too, whereas the women press on until they qualify."

Women's persistence in continuing their education is demonstrative of their desire to succeed. And this is a persistence that seems to leave men behind in the shadows. This man contends that men demonstrated more leadership qualities and applied for more of these kinds of jobs than women did. This seems to be a fair observation for two reasons. Firstly, if they demonstrated more leadership skills and applied for more leadership positions it is because they have always been in the leadership role and thereby acquired the skills. In applying for more of these positions it is probably due to the fact that they were able to develop the kind of confidence needed in the first place. They felt they could do the job because men always did it. And we have seen the reaction of men to those women who feel they can do the job. Secondly, if the men already had acquired the training to make them suitable for these positions, perhaps it is because there previously was an uneven distribution of educational opportunities that favoured men. Is there any wonder they were always more qualified?

The director of the importation/distribution company speaks about the company's

policy to promote from within, and the basis upon which the promotion is made. He explains:

"We don't promote people on the basis of years' of service. We do not operate that way. Someone can either perform in a particular position or they cannot. We promoted one woman because we said that she had some good ideas about management, but maybe we should not have put her in the position of supervising people. Looking back on it now, I think she would have been very good working on her own. I don't think she's really equipped to deal with and supervise people. Indeed, I believe even when we sent her on a course at either BIMAP or Dale Carnegie, that there was a lot of conflict between her and the instructors. I have no doubt that it was her character. Most of the individuals who worked under her supervision are still with the company and we consider them good employees, they are productive and are classified as categories A and B employees."

This director spoke about his company's efforts to promote from within and to place those persons who demonstrate ability, into management or supervisory positions. He spoke in detail of one woman who came up from a clerical to a management position and the failure of those attempts:

"She worked in maybe two or three departments basically in the administrative areas and eventually, we promoted her to marketing representative, and she performed very well. And we thought at that point, that she was very competent at managing people, because she had a tendency to be tough and to get people to do things, to perform their duties. So we promoted her. Then she was marketing representative, and we promoted her again to supervisor, where she didn't have to canvas or sell products to companies. She had to supervise individuals. She was responsible for six or seven sales reps and merchandising. And it was in this position that we found her style of dealing with people very "off-handish". And eventually, we had a situation where literally all of the employees that worked under her literally despised her and did not get on with her. And it reached a stage rather than she supervising her staff, she had to revert back to her director who then had to solve these problems, which of course would have been part of her job. Eventually, we had to sever her employment."

And the president of the publishing company speaks very highly of women in business

today and the withdrawal symptoms of the men.

"I now find that the problem that I had 15 years ago in terms of dealing with women with kid gloves and encouraging them and so on, I am now doing it with the guys. I now have to say to the guys 'come on we can do it' because they see how women move in and take over. I see women no longer apologizing for where they are. Fifteen years ago they were apologizing for where they were and you had to support men. But men are now withdrawing and so I think that my attitude has changed. ... In my newsroom all the bright people are women. All the people who work late at night are women. The men leave and go and drink, but the women are there."

This is certainly a turnaround and the women are portrayed as bright and reliable. And perhaps it is the women who work late that find it more difficult trying to juggle a career and family. It is perhaps also the spouses of these men who go off to drink, who are at home trying desperately to juggle the two roles as well.

### **Gender Definitions given to Jobs**

The commercial sector of the labour market is so structured that there have been distinguishing features given to the jobs that women and men do, since the scientific system of management pioneered the bureaucratic structure of office work. And as an extension of the dichotomy, there is a large discrepancy in their salaries even when women and men perform the same jobs. In Barbados however, this is more often practised in the private sector.

The inequality factor is quite identifiable in the commercial sector which is driven by private enterprise. Women to a large extent, make up the commercial sector at the lower levels, but at the decision-making levels, men dominate. Men are often given the title of office manager, while women become the administrative assistant, or men become

the executive assistant and women, the executive secretary. It is a discrepancy that hinges not on job requirements and responsibility but on title which increasingly facilitates the practise of sex and wage discrimination, and as the treasurer points out, women become very vulnerable in times of economic crises:

"The way things are going right now there might not be the positions there for them to be in. And as long as the workforce is reduced to any extent, the women are the ones who are going through the door, right? Being at the bottom. Or if they are going to be making places for those outside there, who are looking for jobs. The men are the ones who are going to be in there because they are generally still accepted as the breadwinner, although you'll find that there are many single parents who have to look after all the children and support all their needs. But I think generally, for a while, the next 15 years, unless you have a serious braindrain, under the circumstances, the men will move out and perhaps that's the only way that I can see women finding equal slots."

Career interruption for women who re-enter the labour force after raising a family renders them victims of the last-in first-out practice in times of economic problems. There is as well, a large number of part-time female workers who become more vulnerable under these circumstances.

The personnel development officer stated that job categorization based on sex is still in existence, and although many women are becoming more qualified, traditional views still seek to debar women from holding certain positions:

"I was at the top of the administration, and because I was qualified for the job I remember when the general secretary was leaving I was overseas attending a five-month course in the United States, sponsored by the United States Government and I remember the president at the time phoned me in America and he said: 'how would you like to take over as general secretary of the YMCA?' Because in the region at the time, females were very low in positions in the YMCAs because these men had this thing that it's a man's organization and no woman could be a general secretary. I almost fell off my chair. And then he said: 'I think you are competent. You have ideas, you'll be able to follow through your own

ideas, you'd be able to make changes and do what you want to do. There'd be nobody to have to report to'. So in the later YMCA I should say, 'I don't think there is a problem although some of the men to this day, they would tell you there's no way a female has any right being a general secretary of the YMCA. There is no way a female has any right being the president of the YMCA.'

Women holding such a prominent position in this universally recognized male institution seems like a contradiction in itself. And it is relatively easy to understand this since it is an institution whose very principles are designed to exclude women, not only from among its members, but perhaps more profoundly, from being on its executive. The question that emerges therefore is, what part can a woman play on the executive board of male chauvinists serving a historically entrenched male institution whose tenets fundamentally seek to keep women out? But having asked that question, one must also ask, how then were men able for generations, to head organizations, departments, schools, etc. that focused over this period of time, on matters concerning the interest of women? This has been the accepted norm for so long, that it seems so right. But for women? They cannot possibly play a large part in a men's organization -- particularly the Young Men's Christian Association, according to some of its members. This is the experience of a woman who worked in a male institution and the experience of a woman who has worked in a 'male discipline' is strikingly similar. The financial controller explains:

"I can say at the higher levels that men feel sometimes threatened when women move into management positions. I've experienced it in some ways in my job. How it manifested itself is that they don't give you information that you should have to do your job that you know you need. They pretend to forget, or they say they forgot, or they would say they didn't understand that you're working in that area, or that it would help you. It is hardly ever something that you can say is deliberate. It is something



that they would have done deliberately but they can cover it by saying 'I didn't quite understand' or 'you didn't tell me' or 'you didn't make it clear' or 'it was there, I assumed you would know it was there and you would take it'. They would say to the female, where they won't say to a man 'you're not quite ready yet, you need a little bit more experience, you need to understand this a bit more ... or you need something more before I can put you up a little farther'."

Withholding of information from females is another male strategy often employed to deny female administrators the full opportunity to prove their potential. This subtle approach in withholding information, is one often only recognized by the very astute woman, not only that the information is missing, but that it is a male strategy of denial of information. And although this is characterized as a strategy nurtured in fear, the depth of this fear seems to hinge on the fact that if women are promoted, the young male, aspiring to this or similar positions, no longer has to compete only with his male peers, but with a number of competent women. Therefore, he fears these women as they bring into the workplace, the concept of competition for opportunities that will ultimately replace the concept of automatic appointment based on sex. In terms of denial of information the financial controller continues:

"And when they promote you, they tend to promote you in little, small increments -- even if you're performing at your best. You get it in small increments. I don't mean necessarily in money. I mean increments in status. Well this is a male now, and they come into the job and they are bright and capable and performing and so on, they are given a big jump - - status and money. But *the females still have to fight for it*. So I say that a man will get the little increments even when he's slightly incompetent. The woman is not going to get it at all if she's slightly incompetent. In fact, they are going to find a way not only of not getting the increment, but even staying in the job."

As for her personal experience even since moving into the financial hub of things, she recognizes these male strategies and she knows how identify them:

"I have experienced some male contention in terms of women going into management positions. In fact, I think I'm experiencing some now in this company. Not necessarily with me personally, but I recognize that there is to some extent, a possibility that a female can move into a management position, which may be considered higher up the organizational structure and they are pressures at the peer level to circumvent that. And I have experienced it in other jobs as well, regarding females."

What are her personal strategies to overcome these barriers or can they be overcome when it is often only one woman at this level having to deal with the males? She explains: "I haven't overcome them you know! I have circumvented them. If you examine my career, you will see that I have done a lot of moving around. And sometimes when I can't get up, I move out and up. That has been sometimes my way of moving up. I move out and up because you might get it, but you'd be there for a long time before they give it to you. So I can't wait. Why should I wait if there's an opportunity" I would move out and up."

Moving out and up is a counter-strategy for women to accelerate their upward mobility and in some instances it hastens the process more rapidly than if they sought that advancement within the same organization. But according to this engineer the barriers that women face are not the brainchild of men alone, women collude with men to disinherit other women:

"I would just like to say too, that some of the barriers put up in terms of women moving ahead in the management area, are not all put up by males. The worst daggers are from females, either at the same level, or sometimes beneath you. They would say derogatory things, they would even infer things that are not true within the organization and without. They tend to be more deliberate than the men. Sometimes, they do them to your face, you know. But women sometimes are the major impediment for other women getting ahead."

Career ambitious women are trapped in a web weaved from two positions: Men are

known to resent women moving into management positions even if only because they perceive it as a threat to their male power and privilege. Resentment and disrespect meted out by other women are practices grounded in early stages of socialization, where women are depicted as domesticated rather than career oriented and as a result, where they readily accept men in positions of power, they resent other women. The treasurer states:

"As you get to the top it becomes lonelier and you are not necessarily popular ... forgive me, let me exchange the word lonely for alone. There is a difference. Lonely is being alone and not wanting to be there. I was not lonely. I have always heard people say it's lonely at the top. In other words, you are there, you are isolated, you are not really mixing with those below you."

Are these male strategies deliberate efforts to keep women out of these positions? The president and editor-in-chief explains:

"I think it is having the effect of offering different dimensions. I think it is a natural and logical progression that if people with different socialization move into a particular sphere and bring to bear their own attitudes and perceptions and so on, then that career itself is going to have to change. In much the same way that any of the older careers that were dominated ... like nursing, that was dominated entirely by women, but now has men. It must create differences. What these are, it is difficult to say from profession to profession, but I believe that as a matter of principle, it must happen."

But even in acknowledging that some areas of a given profession are being defined for females, for instance, pediatrics in medicine and family law in the legal profession, he explains the reaction of men in the case of family law becoming defined for women:

"Men are afraid of women who defend women in those cases. Again because you see, you have some person to articulate from a position of actual experience and not from a third person position, what is happening. And in medicine again, because women are able to diagnose and having lived certain things, they are sharper in those areas. I think we are going to have a better world. It has to be a far better world. But we have to get

over the initial trauma in the male population which I recognize. But in this society, men are being diverted into drinking and a lot of other things now, that are negative, as their response to the intrusion quote unquote of women entering their things."

Other men shared similar views and one man, a supervisor in a bank spoke about his experience compared to some of his colleagues, particularly one woman who was hired with him. Where he was identified for overseas postings, she remained a teller for an extended period of time. Receiving a crash training program in all areas of banking, he was subsequently given a regional posting and within ten years, he had worked in six different countries where he accumulated an enormous amount of experience at the supervisory and managerial levels. Although he seemed to relate his success to his keen interest in his work and his performance, he still was not sure of the factors management used in identifying him for overseas:

"I went into training because I was identified for overseas posting but I really don't know what the factors were on which I was selected. But I know I always had a good evaluation report. I was given a crash course in various departments and then dumped in a branch in the region for two and a half years ... I am not sure how long the woman who started cash with me remained there but I think she was there for a pretty long time."

## **Conclusion**

Women and men experience different lives in the commercial sector -- not totally different, but notably different. Many women said they had experienced salary discrimination "... he told us ... men worked for more than women...", and promotional discrimination "... I saw men, younger than myself, come into the same bank, get into leadership positions and make strides up the corporate ladder that I was not able to make..."; "...when I came into this organization in 1982, it is interesting to note that

there were no females at all at any level of seniority..."; that they had to work "three times as hard" "... In some areas you get a lot of co-operation and in some areas you find again you have to work three times as hard...", that their promotions were dictated by managers' assessments of whether they wished to have children "...He had identified me for promotion and he asked me did I plan to have more children...", that sometimes in all male fields like engineering they were unwelcome "they did everything to get me out as quickly as possible. And I came out after spending about two years in there..." and that even women could "get nasty" with a female boss "... I got great cooperation from the men but the women were a little bitchy at times and they started to get nasty..."

Perhaps surprisingly, both women and men claimed to be satisfied with their jobs as the first general secretary of the YMCA confirms "...If I ever enjoyed my work it was in the YMCA...", and the claims adjuster "...I get more out of being out there, dealing with people and being able to be one step ahead, and analyze their motives and things like that...", and the engineer "...And job satisfaction again, in the management area and in the finance area, it's profound,...". Men were also happy, the director also liked the progress he made "...I joined the company as a junior and I am now a marketing executive ... I enjoy what I am doing.", and the accountant "...I enjoy my accounting work because maths has always been one of my strongest areas at school and I have no problems with that now." One distinguishing characteristic between the women and the men is the fact that success for the men all of whom were well placed, was a cumulative achievement over an extended period of time as opposed to the women, who seemed to have made progress more rapidly once they were accepted in these professions. For

example, the director had joined his organization at 18 years of age, the accountant remained in accounting "all my life" while women had moved around, sometimes out of their field completely and were able to move into senior positions once the opportunity to prove themselves was available. The personnel manager found no females in management when she joined her organization in 1982, and she pioneered that change, the engineer was the first Barbadian woman to have reached that level, and the claims adjuster had been in a number of unrelated jobs before she settled in the insurance business.

Women often selected their jobs according to whether or not they felt they could juggle the double load of work and family "... I told myself I wanted a job which would have given me flexibility to do things with my children. ... because when I was in the last job, it was really kind of a hassle...", so too did the first general secretary of the YMCA "...I thought the YMCA would have been excellent because I would have been able to pick up the children from school. Men do not seem to have such concerns about juggling career and family because responsibility for the family is generally assumed by the wife. One or two women seemed to have forfeited children for their careers "...the years have slipped by so fast, so I don't even think about it anymore...", said one female entrepreneur, and "... I would like to go on holiday in August, but I can't because this is our busiest period...", and the engineer who said she put her career first "... I hardly have any time with my children ... I don't even spend that much time with the children and their homework..." Except for the president of the publishing company, no men mentioned this situation. Women therefore have to make difficult choices: There are

various options, but all have high costs. Raising children is particularly difficult for single parents -- usually the prerogative of women as the advertising manager explains "... It is much harder on the women because as the career woman, you still have to go home and you're expected to do your chores... whenever I leave here tonight, I'm going to do my laundry..." Men too sometimes regret the absence of parenting "... I really wasn't around you know .... I wasn't really in my view, a good father. I was a good provider, but I wasn't a good father...", but only one man mentioned this, although some did recognize the women's double load "... There is a great deal of pressure when both people in the family are going out to work, particularly when there are children involved. Most of these responsibilities fall on the mother...."

Nonetheless there is now widespread recognition among women and men that things are changing, and very rapidly. Women are entering traditional male fields, they are out-performing men in the schools and often in jobs, they are starting small businesses, being promoted in large ones -- and now the men are beginning to "withdraw". As one male manager said: "the men leave and go and drink, but the women are there."

## **Chapter 5**

### **The Civil Service**

The civil service has become a viable choice for career women. Previously, not many women turned to the civil service in terms of a long term career, but more recently, in the past 15 or so years, women have been playing a greater role not only in terms of numbers but in terms of higher level positions. Due to the structure of the system, and coupled with the fact that men have been in the service for a longer period of time, a large number of women are held back in middle management positions where their advancement is delayed by senior men approaching retirement. But there is evidence that efforts are being made to promote women to some of the most senior positions. Nevertheless, some women speak of frustration with the bureaucracy, and in some cases, report low levels of job satisfaction. What makes it more difficult is the fact that they are first generation women in these positions and are perceived as a threat by men. There is evidence of sex discrimination in terms of female representation at management level and strategies of exclusion from the decision-making process.

Approximately 23% of the labour force is employed by the government, while the private sector is the major employer in Barbados, employing about 65%. The other 12% is split among employer and self-employed, and unpaid family worker and apprentices (Statistical Service Labour Force Report 1975-1983).

The sample spanned an age range from the early 30s to the mid-fifties. The 10 men and 10 women were not a random sample, but were carefully selected to be as



representative as possible of the total target population. Of the ten men, one was a permanent secretary (highest level after the minister), one was a senior official in the ministry of education, one was an assistant police commissioner, six worked in the capacity of director or manager in their respective units, and one was a job analyst. They were all married with children. All their wives worked. The ministries involved were health, tourism, labour, finance, social services, the police force, education, and transportation and communication.

The women were equally as diverse in terms of their levels of achievement. Among them were a registrar of the courts, the head of the civil service, senior welfare and community officers, three departmental managers, a social worker, a senior economist, and a police inspector. They came from the ministries of legal affairs, labour, health, the civil service, and transport and communication, finance and planning, and the police force. Eight were married and had children, and two were single.

The questions posed were the same for the other professions and fall under the following categories: factors affecting career choice and career aspirations, upward mobility, jobs and gender definitions, job satisfaction, family life, the gender structure of the civil service, and occupational discrimination.

### **Career Choices and Aspirations**

The majority (6) of the women interviewed pointed to social and educational change as the two major factors that influenced their career choice. In Barbados, certainly up to the mid-1960s, high school graduates had only three career options

according to these women. This was more frequently expressed by those persons over 50 years of age, who have been able to observe the process and magnitude of change over a longer period. And although the question addresses career choices of both men and women, most of the responses point directly to the limitations that were placed on women and the changes that occurred to reduce, though not totally remove, those limitations. As one woman indicates, "if you start with where we are at today, the career choices of men and women, the differentiating line has certainly narrowed". And she explains that much of this change has occurred at the political level:

"A number of changes have occurred at the political level, and thus influencing the economic level, affecting the discrimination against women. Two major things have happened during the past 20 years. Government has introduced the integrated school program so that boys and girls are sitting in the same classrooms. They are pursuing the same studies. They can make the same choices for career, in terms of preparation, skills training and so. Once they are available in the school and also in the tertiary institutions, there is nothing stopping them, either man or woman, from pursuing, except social conditioning."

This points to the reformed system of education which became the springboard for women to fully participate in economic development and is certainly a step towards the promotion of gender equality. The seriousness of the issue of sex discrimination is evident in the government's endorsement of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women on July 24, 1980, and ratified on October 15, 1980, even though it took almost one year before it came into force on September 3, 1981 (Report on 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 1988). Women spoke about what the situation was like in the early post-war years. According to both women and men in the

professions studied, women had three options for a career, which this woman identifies as nursing, teaching, and the civil service:

"I remember in those days there were not a lot of options for women. You either had to nurse or teach, or go into the [civil] service. But I knew I wanted to be a nurse. I sort of relate it to when I was in hospital for my tonsils and adenoids. I was so impressed with the nurses in white. It sort of confirmed that was what I wanted to do. It looked so professional!"

Others cited socialization, economic status and fathers's education and occupation as influencing factors but success of any of the three choices was guided by and limited to the social structure and the way in which it worked. The three options women had were further reduced if those women who went into nursing decided to marry, for they had to resign as this woman explains:

"I knew from the time I was at school that I wanted to be a nurse. I didn't want to be anything else but a nurse. So the minute I left school, I went straight into the hospital and I enjoyed nursing until I met my husband. I got married and it was at that point when *you were not allowed to be married and to be a nurse. You had to resign.*"

Not only were women limited in their career options, they were severely penalized if they changed the conditions under which they made their choice. Perhaps too, such harsh measures of having to resign in case of marriage were in recognition of the scope of the responsibilities society had placed on the housewife. Maybe it was inconceivable to policy-makers (men no doubt) that a person - not only a woman -- but that a person could cope with the responsibilities of the home and raising a family and have a profession too. And this goes right back to the way in which girls and boys are socialized and society's expectations of the roles of the two sexes, giving rise to an uneven division of domestic labour. A division which places women in a disadvantaged

position. For whether women have paid jobs, they are still primarily responsible for the domestic chores. Hence the reason why nurses, and not doctors, had to resign. It had to do with doing two jobs. And even if the doctor (who was usually a male) got married he still had only one job -- his profession, so there was no real need for him to resign. However, economic development and social change over the last three decades called for a larger and more qualified labour force. Consequently, it created extensive social change that had important ramifications on the existing social structure: not only did it create greater career opportunities but more importantly, it made more women eligible to enter the labour market which recently gives rise (in Barbados) to the dual labour market concept and reason to re-examine the concepts of breadwinner and head of household.

Such views consider the traditional situation of women and the confined framework within which they functioned. But some women addressed the question from a current perspective, which to some extent, hints at the younger age group of respondents. For example, this woman states the current factors which affect career choices, are salary level, the prestige associated with the job, and the social status which the job generates, but she also explains that "...because of the education system in Barbados, where it is open and free up to and including tertiary level for both sexes, you will find that females are exposed to a wider area of study that might otherwise be experienced in many other developed countries. So increased opportunity has also had major influence on the choice of profession, whereas before, women may not have had the opportunity they now have".

Men identified similar factors: seven indicated social and economic factors as

having significant influence. These were described as the need to work, parents' economic background, marital status, and the availability of work. These men all responded on a general basis using their own experience in the economic and social conditions as the frame of reference. With the exception of one man, the men were in their mid-forties or older, which may help to explain the factors identified. Focusing on social and educational change one man cited the integration of women in the labour force:

"Women are becoming more educated now because there are openings out there in all categories. And although you haven't been finding any strong infusion in areas where physical ability is a prime factor, for example in construction, trades, and so on, I think that at one time law might have been largely a male oriented area, but now it is becoming strongly female oriented."

But even though he further explains that employment opportunities helped to determine what job one did, he contends that social change played an important role:

"...the whole career guidance movement has exposed a lot of youngsters in fifth forms to the possibilities out there in various areas and they have utilized this information to get themselves into these areas. Because once you know more about an occupation you can determine if you are capable of doing it. So that is one of the factors I think that would influence women to go into more male dominated areas than before."

Equality of educational opportunity does influence career choice and since opening up all fields of study to men and women, statistics show an increase of women going into formerly male-oriented programs. In 1983-84 women made up 4.3% of the student body in electronics at the Samuel Jackman Polytechnic and by 1986-87, it had reached 7%, falling from 7.9% in 1985-86. Enrolment in electronic installation increased from 2.1% to 8.8% in 1986-87 reaching as high as 9.1% in 1985-86 and the trend was the same for

mechanical engineering rising from 3.8% to 5.7% in 1985/86. (Report on the 1979 UN Convention on Sex Discrimination).

One man indicated self-motivation while another spoke of the influence of his brother in his career choice. Having passed through the levels of the profession and having qualified in the administrative tracks of nursing, he now manages a polyclinic. But he also stated that his decision for nursing was one of the few choices available, the others being law enforcement, the teaching profession, and the civil service.

In speaking from a professional standpoint, the psychologist observes that:

"Women seem to be more sure about what they want to be than men and I'm thinking in terms of the young people that I talk with and the trends that I see. I also find that women tend to think out the consequences of a particular action while men jump into the pool and then realize they can't swim and then they have to decide what they want to do. Whereas a woman would have thought out the whole process before she jumps into the water."

Perhaps women tend to think things through more because their situation in the labour market is quite different from men's. By virtue of this difference, when they make a career choice they want to be sure that they know exactly what is involved, and that they have no misconceptions about their investment. For women, it is much more than choosing a career. It involves rearranging one's life style and status. Therefore, a woman needs to be sure of the decision she is taking.

## **Upward Mobility**

Upward mobility in the civil service may reflect number of years' of service as well as competence. None the less, it appears to be highly competitive for men and women for the most senior positions. This is even more noticeable as both men and women become more qualified. This man states:

"...the women who are upwardly mobile in the service now, are the ones who have been really well qualified and able to make their mark in terms of personality, and association too. I mean association in terms of socializing, being daring, knowing people and so on. That is one of the reasons they are able to move up. But normally, the men would have been moving up on a normal pattern. In the service, the women need to be more high profile to move up than the men might have to be."

The distinction made by this man on methods of promotion for men and women touches on the differential treatment of women which they have been articulating for some time now. This man states that women need to be more high profile than men to move up, but women contend they need to be more qualified, more competent and work sometimes three times as hard. This method of promotion for women as outlined by this man, discredits or perhaps ignores the value of their work and places more emphasis on their femininity. Yet on the other hand, men's promotion according to this man, is based solely either on their maleness or their work.

Another senior civil servant makes a different observation:

"The principal training officer is a female but you are not going to find many deputy permanent secretary (DPS) or permanent secretaries (PS). You will find a lot of senior administrative officers 1 (SAO1) are women ... but at the top -- don't forget that most of the men already have a lot of seniority over women who would only have filtered in and were subject to slow promotion earlier."

He explains that changes have been made to recognize the contribution women can make

and the efforts made to promote equality of occupational opportunity:

"When these men filter out or reach their retirement levels, you will find more of these women who are AO1 and SAO start to move up to DPS and PS. So in about 10 or 15 years' time, there is going to be a complete reversal in the civil service in terms of domination. It will even out as the more senior males move out and the senior women move up. But right now I don't think it is any discrimination in terms of gender. It is just a matter of the men having seniority and they will have to go through a natural progression. I think we may still be operating on the borderline of sex discrimination from the point of view that women and men are accustomed to doing certain jobs. But we are moving past that stage rapidly, I think."

Referring to the historical exclusion of women from top positions in the civil service, this man points out that since men already have the advantage over women in terms of location, their promotion to higher level positions will depend on the movement of men out of the system. This implies therefore, that some women will never make it up the ladder because, as they await the movement of men, they themselves are ageing. In addition to this, they must still compete with men coming up alongside them.

One man, a director (manager) of a polyclinic felt that men were not getting their fair share in the nursing profession because it has always been a female domain. He did not think that upward mobility rates for men and women were comparable and insisted that "... as a matter of fact there is always this complaint that men are not having upward mobility as fast as they should in the nursing profession..." There are two important facts to which this man seems oblivious: (a) as director of the clinic, he has excelled in a traditionally female dominated field. In other words, he has beaten women on their own playground, at their own game, and (b), he ignores the fact that men still dominate the upper echelons of most other professions, (having always been male-



defined) and therefore, they are still to a great extent enjoying the "advantages" of that favoured position. Another man offered a different view of the situation. He believes upward mobility for men and women is comparable and states:

*"... I don't see women as being hampered in any way. I do not see men as having any particular advantages over women. Definitely as managers, my experience is that women sometimes make better managers than men. And in this particular organization, it is true, we only have one lady who is a department head, but below that, I think at the deputy level and supervisory level, I think the women dominate very heavily.*

The following is an attempt to show in tabular form what this man defines as women dominating heavily at supervisory level.

**Table 3**  
**Staff Distribution at Government Agency,**  
**by department, by sex, by status, 1991**

Department	M	F	Position		No.in Dept.
			Mgr.	Asst.Mgr	
Project Analysts	03	08	M	M	11
Administration	03	07	M	F	10
Research/ Planning	04	04	M	F	08
Legal services	04	02	M	-	06
Finance	03	07	M	F	10
Internal Audit	02	00	M	M	02
Secretariat	02	09	F	M	11
Managing Execs.	02	00	M	M	02
Totals	23	37			60

Source: Statistics obtained from the government agency, 1991.

The above table is a concise profile of the major departments in this organization, and it does indeed confirm that "women dominate heavily" as the respondent stated, but

at the lower levels. This is only numerical dominance. In terms of positions of power, men are the ones who really dominate. For example, of a staff of 60 persons, women account for 62% (or 37) of employees whereas men account for only 38% (or 23). Nevertheless, men are able to occupy seven of the eight managerial positions, and women only one. In other words, of the 23 men on staff in these departments, 30.4% are managers and 26% are assistant managers. Combined, this means the 23 men hold 13 or 56.8% of management positions. On the other hand, of the 37 women, only 1 (or 2.7%) has the position of manager and 2 (or 5.4%) the position of assistant manager. Put differently, women as a group, are disproportionately represented at the upper levels since they make up 61.7% of the staff, and account for only 8.1% of the managerial positions. In comparison, men who make up only 38.3% of the staff, control as much as 81.3% of the managerial positions. Even in the case of the secretariat department where there are only two males and a nine females, the two men have the only two managerial positions in the department.

Why do these disparities prevail in a society where women are becoming more qualified at higher levels and in more fields of study? The government agency referred to above was established at a time when women had already been acquiring management training for, and holding management positions in the business sector. Therefore while it may be argued that having women in management positions is still not commonplace, the gender disparities in this new institution reflects the stereotypical and traditional approach to management appointments. But then one may ask why are those three women put into managerial positions? Perhaps it is because some women are determined

to demand what they merit. But since the United Nations Declaration of the Decade of Women in 1975, member countries have an obligation to make an effort to integrate women in the workplace at all levels, therefore given that the above statistics reflect a gross under representation of women in management positions, the token female presence at management level suggests the intention is not to comply.

On further discussion with this assistant manager, he emphasized that it was not his organization's policy to make management positions a male domain:

"...it is not any policy in that direction. It depends on a person's talent and information and qualifications ... I think people try to get the best people in the best positions, in terms of efficiency and so on. So I would think that as women move away from this idea that they are tied to a house and their job is to get children, and they move away from this dependence on men for support and they become more career oriented and more qualified, I can see it's a matter of course where the whole idea of sex or whatever in terms of whether you're a man or a woman, that idea will really become a non-issue."

This reflects the traditional male ethos of the position of men and women in general in the workplace and it is often advanced by males such as this one, as an occurrence in which men played no role. Certainly, the distinction made of, and the value given to, women's work in comparison to men's can hardly be construed as acts of women. And it was not that long ago that society attributed a certain amount of prestige to men, particularly those in high corporate positions, whose wives remained at home in the role of housewife. To a large degree, they derived some status from being able to afford to have their wives stay at home because at that time, class divisions were determined largely by one's economic status. Thus, this "dependence on men" to which this man alludes, was a situation created by society for women where they became

subordinate to men. It was, and still is, a power relationship that has historical roots and evolves in accordance with economic change as there were severe limitations to an education for work, as women were expected to get married and become housewives. Consequently, one must acknowledge that the denial of access to educational opportunity does not imply the absence of the capacity to do certain things such as manage or become a business executive but rather the denial of the opportunity to prove oneself. To refer again to the department secretariat where there are nine women and two men, it is obvious that the work is being done by the women, while the two men have the two managerial positions in the department.

Some men see the situation differently and speak of the barriers to women's progress:

"I think there are tremendous barriers all over the Caribbean. And I think with those sorts of barriers you are going to enter the boardroom but on a very selective basis. What I see is that women with family name connections have been sort of allowed in. But we have always had to graduate to that level. If you look around this organization, we had one woman out of eight in the last how many years? One out of eight members of the board for many years and at present, we have none. In top management people are hand picked, really. And we don't have any women in real top positions."

In his attempt to explain women's changing role in society, this man seems distinctly hostile to women. He contends:

"The other thing is that some women want to show that they can be like the boys and a lot of aggression comes out. And when I think about it probably in psychology, the woman now wants to indicate that she has a penis too and there is a lot of attempted castration on the part of females."

Another man expresses similar hostility with his assertion:

"You know, it's only a handful of women pushing these issues but if you

look at any of these so-called organizations, you will find that the women are all lesbians, either divorced or single, and are frustrated, and miserable."

This display of hostility towards women is a reaction to the new challenge that men in the labour force are facing since women have become serious competitors for job opportunities. Both quotes imply that women are acting out of character and these two men contend that it is only a small fraction of women that are making waves. The first quote lumps all men together in a close knit type of club -- the boys -- that women are trying to imitate through their behaviour in the labour force. The second man corroborates the first by implying that these women are not the "normal" type -- they deviate from the norm: they are "either divorced or single and are frustrated and miserable" -- it is only a handful all of whom he characterizes as lesbians. Married women, he implies, have no time for these issues, they are happy.

But some women do admit that they have to be different. Some feel in order to succeed they have to display masculine behaviours:

"I find now that women are going into a lot of the men's roles ... what people feel are men's roles. They look at the feminine side of a woman instead of looking to see if she can really handle the job. So *you have to display masculine tendencies*. You have to be either strong in your voice or you have to show a tough personality to let people know that you can do the work."

The one criterion needed to do the job is to be like a man. To behave in a masculine manner. Sometimes women do demonstrate a different approach to their job as well. They seek promotion and upward mobility but merit seems to be the only basis on which they base their ambition. This personnel officer explains the effort she has made to be competent in her job:

"I can tell you from experience because I have a licence to drive a bus since 1985. I said to myself at the time 'if you are in personnel and you are dealing with accidents, complaints, etc., you should at least know the units that you are going to be disciplining someone for."

Indicating therefore the extent to which some women go to become competent in their job and it points to a strategy to gain confidence that none of the men have mentioned -- it also shows the extra involvement and commitment women are willing to make in order to do the job well. And sometimes women have to develop very different skills as this woman points out:

"I think one of the things that women are learning to do is to disagree. And they must not allow men to shout them down and frighten them. Of course, you need to know when to withdraw, and when to come back quietly and fight for what you want. But it's something you learn over the years. So they know when they shout that they don't stop you from making your point."

Men who are opposed to the Women's Movement and others not well informed about women's issues often articulate their feelings in a hostile manner. It certainly contradicts the rapid advancement which the society has made and casts a shadow on the development process in which women are playing an important role.

Even when women become competitive and have high ambitions, they are not encouraged nor do they receive the same treatment as the males:

"I acted as personnel manager for one year -- 1985-1986 that was the longest period but I acted on several occasions. When they had board meetings they invited me but just for like a little 15 minutes. Only at that point and then you are free to go. I was never part of the deciding factor. And I think a lot of that is to do with the fact that 'she's a woman, she can't have anything worthwhile to contribute to these meetings'."

Women had a variety of views about women moving up the corporate ladder, but they agree that as a consequence of tradition their rise to the top will take much longer

even when they are qualified for the positions, as one explains:

"...the women are qualified, but it has to take a certain amount of years. There's a little time and I'll tell you why. If there are supposed to be 20 permanent secretaries, and they are already there, they are men. You just don't move them to put a woman. But I'm not saying that women are not coming up now. But in another ten years or so, we will have a few women. And still, regardless of the fact that women are forging ahead, I am not convinced that men are accepting it as gracefully as I would have hoped, because of the education that we are now being given. I am saying there's no great amount of encouragement".

Another woman at the management level agrees that a number of factors affect upward mobility and offers a different perspective:

"I feel that if a woman shows that she's good, there's no way that they can keep her down. It happens occasionally, but that is not the norm now, because there are a lot of women. If they demonstrate that they are good, if people have confidence in their performance, if they show that they can manage a department, and they manage it well, you meet heads at department meetings, you go to budget meetings and you've got to argue with those men, and fight for what you want in your department. And it is on those kinds of occasions that people tend to grade you. So these are a whole lot of indirect ways that you move..."

This woman who supervises a large number of men and women gives a general assessment and links job satisfaction more to upward mobility. She states:

"I think if you are prepared to work hard you have a fair chance among the men. Some people feel that everything that happens to them is because they are a woman. I don't go along with that because very often you can identify why they are not moving. I've had to push some of them back to university. And some typists I said to them 'look computers are coming in, soon they won't have anytime with you. The whole profession is changing. Get back out there to class'. But there are others who are very ambitious and would get out there and do things. But there are those who would sit there and hope for things to happen."

Nonetheless, this woman believed that some women with families are more contented with their jobs because they provided security for them.

One woman felt that upward mobility rates were equal for both men and women who possessed the appropriate qualifications:

"In terms of the professions and jobs that call for qualifications, upward mobility rates are about the same, but I find in the unskilled areas and maybe in industry and so, it would not be that great, and you will find more men coming through to the managerial positions and so on. But in professions, you will find there is a greater balance based on ability than gender."

Suggesting that it has become more difficult to discriminate against women who are equally qualified as men, this woman contends it is mainly in the unskilled areas where sex discrimination is more frequently practised and where women would have more difficulty challenging it. Some intimated that even though there are laws against sex discrimination women still were not getting their fair share. This woman explains:

"...Barbados does not have a female permanent secretary<sup>1</sup>, even after all of this, and while it was felt that women came into the public service much later than men, that stage where women were not at the catching up point, should have worked itself out a long time ago..."

Promotion to senior positions is often made increasingly difficult for women. Some men resort to methods of intimidation, as this woman explains:

"The first few months after I got the job it was very difficult because it was predominantly men, and you, as a woman, you have to tell a man what he should do or tell him that he is suspended. It was difficult because I was the first female personnel manager in this organization and the men would come in the office if they had a problem, and the first thing they would do is roll up their shirt sleeves as if to scare me. And some of the men in the office would ask me if I thought I did the right thing. But that only made me tougher."

---

<sup>1</sup> Two women have since been appointed permanent secretary one in the ministry of health, 1993, and in the ministry of education.



This woman was dealing with men whose jobs seemed to require or often attracted those males with obvious physical strength and muscle, so it was a group of tough looking men that this woman supervised some of whom she felt intimidating. She confessed however, that on many occasions she was so scared that they would one day beat her up that she even considered going back to her previous office job. But with time, the men adjusted to the demands of the position and she was able to stand up to them. Now they tell her: "you are not afraid of anyone. We have to be careful with how we deal with you because you're a woman who would laugh with you and suspend you at the same time". She has since been getting much more respect and cooperation from them and is very happy she remained in the job.

Career women who are married relate to upward mobility differently from single women. And employers consider their income as secondary to their husband's. Economic demands on household income have made it a necessity for many women to participate in the paid labour force. Their income has become crucial to maintaining the standard of living of the family. But even within that context, the changing role of women in the family may have serious problems for the marriage itself as this woman explains:

"...another thing you have to look at is that you get women who are mostly married so you still look at the man as the breadwinner ... they feel that if the woman is making more money than the man within a family, especially a married family, you get problems with that too, because people are afraid. They figure it would have something to do with their marriage. So I find that women who are married prefer to stay down the ladder. It's a deliberate effort and it could be one of the factors why they promote men."

This woman further explains why women must employ different strategies depending on their situation:

"If you look at it, you will see that it is a man's world. No matter as the years go on how much education you get, it is still a man's world. We look at the sex of the person, more so than looking at the ability to do the job. And we as women help play up that".

Another woman articulated similar sentiments and explains the concerns of women which seem to escape men:

"Although the woman is looking to be upwardly mobile she is still thinking 'well, one day I would like to be married', and while still at the top she's also thinking she would have to marry somebody who is above her. She would still feel insecure to marry somebody who would be earning less than she is. And she also wants to marry somebody with more status. In these days this is still happening."

Some career women who are married prefer to stay down. Domestic competition for power helps to maintain a gender disparity in the workplace and some ambivalence among women, as some of them do not want to move ahead of their husbands, professionally nor in the home. Described as a strategy to keep their marriage intact, it mirrors the strategy which a female university lecturer employs to make herself and career appear second to her husband and his career. While women as a population are agitating for equality in the workplace and in the wider society, they compromise that equality in the home to save their marriage, placing themselves in a contradictory and confusing bind.

Career women are finding themselves in a most precarious position. In the majority of cases, their role in the home has not changed since they became full participants in the labour force. They back themselves into a corner of compromise, from which they assume a secondary position in an effort to preserve their marriage. In their public life they seek and often achieve some equality with men in the workplace, but in

their private life, their subordinate position seems non-negotiable. A position that has deep historical roots and which becomes more difficult to alter because of its individual nature.

## **Job Satisfaction**

There is a sharp distinction between what constitutes job satisfaction for men and women. It is not absolutely everyone's intention or desire to compete at the academic level for a successful career, some men and women set different career goals and are perhaps contented with less, professionally, based on how they rate their priorities. But those women who intend to compete fully are not always satisfied with their experience but are sometimes reluctant to react. This woman explains:

"Women are not particularly satisfied. But Barbadian women are not militant. They will press on, they will work through the organization. Sometimes they are not even sufficiently vocal. They are a little too accepting of the situation. The situation has got to be very glaringly discriminatory for that kind of spontaneous response. But one of the things that I'm very, very, heartened about is the fact that women's organizations are at a stage now, where they are doing the initiation themselves, which to me, shows the level of consciousness they have reached."

The effect of this passive attitude results in job dissatisfaction as this woman states:

"We are seeing a reduction in job satisfaction. I myself tend to question what is happening now. There is very little job satisfaction particularly if the job is a dead-end job and you are sitting there doing the same thing everyday, which is certainly mechanical and it doesn't use your brain. It can be very soul-destroying unless you are a person who would come in and say 'I really don't want to do this'. This makes me happy and I would try to move that person."

While women are reaching this level of consciousness as a group and reacting to

discriminatory situations affecting them, men are reacting negatively as this woman indicates:

"This has caused a little bit of concern on the part of some men, particularly the ones who are not prepared to move and who see the progress of women as something that they must fear. Because they see it as a threat to them and their autonomy and their status, which has been conferred on them by society and therefore should be eternal. It is now being said that the women's aggressive approach to their own development is creating a negative reaction from men in terms of their own ambitions and their own motivation. Men are literally dropping out of being as productive as they should be. And figures indicate it is being evident now ... that the majority of students at the university are women, by far."

One young woman who was prepared to pursue a banking career speaks about her frustrations in her job and how the institution militates against her job satisfaction:

*"you speak as if the job is something you love, but it is something you do. It's like a necessary evil.* When I was in cash it was more satisfying to me because at that point I provided a service to the customers. They were like my bosses. I was doing something for them. Job satisfaction was knowing that you are providing a service, helping someone make a decision. Right now I'm auxiliary, helping someone provide that service. So when you ask about job satisfaction, when I was in cash it could be measured by customers' responses. Now it's meeting deadlines and to me that's not something to relish, it is something that adds to stress. My job is neither challenging nor is it fulfilling."

This woman certainly contradicts the literature where it is argued that women in banking and in such jobs as cashier are stagnating and are dissatisfied because these are routine jobs. But this woman enjoyed her job as a cashier and her level of satisfaction fell when her new job intercepted her interaction with customers. Her statements suggest that job satisfaction cannot be uniform and is not always measured by the same criteria, but is determined primarily by the individual. To emphasize her dissatisfaction, she talked about arrangements she was making to return to school to become either a special

educator, or a social worker. Her desire is to move into a field where the job revolves around interacting with people and performing a service for them and she believes the two fields she mentioned offer those things and are also interesting.

A social worker provided an analysis of job satisfaction in a very different way. Moving from the particular to the general, she sees it initially as an individual objective, and identifies the conditions under which the individual may reach that level:

"I think it is more of an individual thing than the male/female categorization. I would say it has ups and downs. There are cases I work on that are frustrating and sometimes the resources being limited tend to frustrate my efforts. And there are times when I accomplish something and it makes me feel good that I have been able to help this person. But generally, it is difficult to say, with any certainty, whether or not other people are satisfied. But I would agree that generally, people would tend to say that depending on the case, depending on the resources available, and how well they are able to accomplish whatever objectives they set out to fulfil that leads to their job satisfaction."

For this woman job satisfaction is measured not so much in terms of her personal progress but more in terms of her effectiveness and accomplishments. She further explained that because many of the social workers in the country made a "crossover" from nursing, it may be seen as another nurturing role which may perhaps offer women an added advantage over men in the profession in terms of job satisfaction.

Another woman spoke of her situation as assistant director to a male director of her organization. Although she had acted as director for about six months until he filled the position, she felt the new director tried to isolate her by excluding her from the day-to-day activities and interaction necessary to get the job done:

"Even when he wants information that I have, he would go to the accountant --- a male, for this information. In my opinion he relates to the accountant as his assistant and it makes me very unhappy. It has come to

the point where the accountant told him that he cannot replace me with him because he does not do my job. But apart from him, everyone else in here gets along well. Both the men and the women give me a lot of support."

Why was she not appointed director? Having acted in that position she knew the demands which the job imposed and decided not to apply for it. This woman believed her superior felt threatened by her because of his incompetence and lack of qualifications. She was fully qualified not only for her job but for his as well but she did not aspire to become director of the unit. She was happy to remain in her job as assistant director, indicating another way of measuring job satisfaction and that not all women aspire to be at the top.

Pointing to other changes which women are making, another woman states:

"Women are trying to go into male things that were male-dominated, such as trades. You see women also going into bus driving, you see women driving taxis. Women are going into all these other things. I don't think men are moving as quickly. The men opt out and leave. But the women are now saying 'look I'm not staying here for 10 years'. And you're going to ask for a transfer and you're going to qualify yourself and you're going to get skills that you can negotiate with."

This woman explains two of the major changes:

"We now have equal salary for equal work and quite recently, ... if you had asked me last year this time, it might have been different, but now the last thing in the civil service that has been done, they have made it possible for women to take their spouses on long leave. At one time, up to last year, the man would have the benefit of taking his family on long leave, which is awarded after you have worked a certain number of years, and part of the passage is paid. But it wasn't so with the women, but now it is."

The above points directly to areas where sex discrimination in the civil service was policy and one must not think this practice was peculiar to the public sector, for the salary and benefits differential based on sex outlined above was equally pervasive in the

private sector. Both the public sector and the private sector openly practised sex discrimination in terms of salary scales and benefits for women and men and in terms of promotion. The International Decade of Women was cited by most women as the major instrument policy-makers used to address sex discrimination in the labour market and in the wider society.

That women receive differential treatment vis-a-vis men is not to imply that all men are satisfied in their jobs. A variety of factors have been identified as affecting job satisfaction for women. Men too, indicated a number of factors that affect their job satisfaction. The job analyst in describing his level of satisfaction in his job sees it in terms of the contribution he has been able to make in reforming the system:

"Right now my basic duty is administrative reform and motivation in the civil service and I am trying to move into the ministry of the civil service where the real administrative reform goes on. I am the only job analyst in Barbados who is formally trained. So to answer the question about job satisfaction, I would say that I'm reaching a stage now in my job where I have exhausted what I can do at this stage as a job analyst, because they have put out the standard operations classifications stuff."

This man indicates job satisfaction for him is linked directly to his contribution to the job. And because he has experience in evaluating various staff and jobs in the system, he offers a general assessment of the satisfaction levels of men and women.

"I don't usually get the impression that the majority of women in the service are dissatisfied in terms of promotion. More of the women seem concerned about job security than the men, probably because of family responsibilities, whereas a man would tend to complain more about not getting a chance to be promoted and move up the ladder."

One gathers from this not only the impact of family life on career women, but more importantly, the extent to which they are willing to compromise their career to meet the

demands of family life. And to take this a bit farther, it also suggests the type of determination the women exhibit to make a substantial contribution to their family life style. This sharply digresses from arguments made by men quoted earlier who stated that women have to move away from depending on men for their support. One can perhaps accept this rationale of the women who are not prepared to pursue further studies to enhance their careers but are still concerned with a job situation that helps to guarantee their life style.

Another man in his career for at least three decades states:

"I joined the force in '56 and like I said, I believe that I did exceptionally well or reasonably well in the training centre and to date, there are only about nine or ten of us remaining from that group of persons, and without any exaggeration, I am the most senior of those persons. And I have been like that almost throughout my career. It was kind of rewarding in that I travelled extensively on police business, and I consider that I have had some of the best training in the highest colleges that the police could attend."

One manager of a social services unit gives a general perspective:

"In terms of job satisfaction it's a very personal and individual thing. What may be job satisfaction for me may not be job satisfaction for another man. When I look at job satisfaction, I look at the individual because there are a lot of factors that are militating against the person deriving job satisfaction. In general terms what may cause a person not to achieve job satisfaction ... one would be status, lack of promotion, financial rewards, and then the frustration of bureaucracy. In Barbados it is very difficult to measure job satisfaction. It is said that 80% of the people do not get job satisfaction, especially in the public service because there are a lot of factors which prevent you from functioning as a manager. And the bureaucracy you have to go through will frustrate you."

Without becoming too personal in his assessment he projects a clear picture of the elements that intercept job satisfaction in the civil service. And as he continues he seems to be expressing his personal reaction:



"I mean people are very, very frustrated especially in decision-making processes where you have a lot of responsibility and you are not allowed to make decisions and that sort of thing. I know a lot of managers who are dissatisfied. In actual fact, a lot of people come to work and they are bored most of the time."

One man, the chief nursing officer, enjoys his job tremendously and measures his satisfaction in terms of his contribution to the development of the nursing profession itself:

"Yes by and large I am very satisfied. I've always been very lucky to have had people who had a personal interest in me, to assist me, and in turn I have been able to do a number of things which have been able to upgrade the human resource capability as a system in general. Yes, I would say I get job satisfaction. I won't say I'm self-actualized at the moment but I get personal satisfaction from piloting those kinds of innovative changes in terms of the human side of enterprise in particular. I am satisfied this has been the case for a significant number of people."

But does not all this reflect the uneven distribution of domestic responsibilities for career couples? The often lighter load of these responsibilities that men sometimes assume is less demanding and less physically draining. And as one woman explained, in order to cope, her working day begins in the early hours of the morning: "...before I come here on mornings, there are certain things I have to put straight, and look after certain things. A man gets ready, and he goes out to his job. He comes back in and gets something to eat and he can act in a different fashion." And maybe, this has to do with the fact that they are treated in a different fashion too. But more recently, efforts are made to promote equality in the workplace which may serve to increase job satisfaction.

### Gender, family life and careers

As in the other professions, women and men in the civil service are affected

differently by their family life. And in some cases, women spoke in terms of "staying down" in their job for fear that promotion may affect their family life and their marriage. Nevertheless, both men and women agree that most of the domestic responsibility is carried by the woman even though men have been getting more involved in domestic chores. A female senior civil servant states:

"Of course it [the effect] is different because up to now, the woman is still expected to get the food on the table, get the clothes ready, although the husband *helps out* the wife and the mother. And even the choice of words [*helps out*] here will tell you that it is still seen as her job, and most people will tell you this. It is still seen as the woman's job to get the food on the table. It is seen by society as a whole. It is part and parcel of society. Up to now men and women still see the work in the home as women's work. This is how we have been socialized to think and it is not going to change in haste."

This woman further indicated that it will take a new form of socialization where little boys and girls are treated equally in the home. She contends that to wait to implement such change in the labour market is not to make the effort necessary to promote equality in society. She makes a conscious effort to socialize her children differently in terms of assigning household chores and explains that it is only the age factor and not gender, that will determine the assignment of chores to her two daughters and one son. But one queries whether the children are being exposed to a new distribution of household chores between mother and father as well. She states:

"He (her husband) helps clean on an occasional basis. I do more cleaning than he does. I don't know why, but this is how it is. I would say the cleaning is seen as my responsibility. In fact, I would have to say the domestic chores are seen more as my responsibility than his, but that is not to say he does not participate. I do more of it, and there's an understanding. Some Saturdays he'll get up before I do and he does most of the housework. But there are days when he doesn't do it."

Her new approach to the socialization of her children does contradict their experience in the home, which may eventually intercept the success of this new effort. And she admits she does more of the housework than her husband does and it is seen as her responsibility. Perhaps the children also think they are helping her in the same way her husband thinks he does, and perhaps they also see the domestic chores as her responsibility since everyone seems to be helping her.

Another woman offers a scenario in which there is a more equitable distribution of duties:

"Domestic life intercepts my usual dedication and commitment to my job. But it affects my husband equally as much. Our household responsibilities are seen in terms of inside and outside chores, which means that the inside chores are female and the outside chores are male. But in many cases, he will still help with the inside jobs as well."

This woman later explained that she has had to adopt a kind of flex time schedule in order to meet the demands of her young child and her job. But this flex time has been explained in terms of coming to work earlier in the morning in order to be able to leave early enough in the afternoon to meet her obligations in the evening. And in spite of the fact that she believes that domestic chores equally affect her husband's dedication and commitment to his job, she states that he has been able to obtain three job promotions on an average of about one every three years. He also views his career differently from the way he views hers. *"My husband sees his career as more important because he earns more and contributes more to the household.* But he has had more promotions where I have not had one in ten years. On a comparative basis, he has had three promotions for my ten years." Perhaps this disparity in job opportunity relates to the misconception that

women's income is complementary income. Perhaps too, not only by employers but by the men who see their contribution as more important and by the women who remain in a job for ten years with no promotions. Therefore, the impact of that effect on their careers seems to be enormously imbalanced and implies that despite legislation, the work ethic still favours men and works to the disadvantage of the woman.

The psychologist explains how family life affects a career couple with a family. He seemed to share a partnership that was not that noticeable in other interviews. But when problems arose with their babysitting arrangements, it became quite clear who made the decisions in the family. He states:

"We worked opposite each other. In Montreal you know if you have children you either take them to the babysitter or you make some other kind of arrangement and have someone come in. And it wasn't that easy to get someone to come to your house back then. And we realized that she was having a problem where we were taking her. I told my wife 'that's it. You stay home and look after her and when she gets a certain age, you can go back to work'."

Obviously, this important decision which would not only affect her career on a long term basis, but would immediately reduce her to a dependency state, was unilaterally made by him. Simultaneously, it made him the breadwinner, on whom she must now depend, while his career remained uninterrupted. He already seemed to be the decision-maker, so his new status perhaps would have given him enhanced power. He also pointed out that by the time their son came along, new arrangements had been made, as his wife had gone back out to work. In order to look after their children and continue in their careers, this couple worked out a new plan: "We took the decision that we were going to work opposite each other. If she worked 4:00 - 12:00 midnight, I worked 7:00 - 3:00 p.m. We

did that for many years". With both in the health care business they were able to work shifts that were compatible with their domestic life style. It also appears as though the female has become part of the decision-making process in the home as he states "we took the decision ...".

A senior administrator acknowledging the plight of career women with family responsibilities contends that there is still an imbalance for women in terms of responsibilities, that favours men:

"If they have a shared arrangement, the impact need not be disproportionate. If you have a situation where the woman is expected to continue her role as if she wasn't working, when in fact she's working, then the impact is great. In my own particular case, I would think that we share and even though my wife would probably still do most of the domestic work, my disposition is to help. I don't see it as disproportionate. Women still have to bear children and they still have to raise them and so on, so even in the sharing arrangement, I would think that women still have a greater burden in terms of pursuing a career and raising a family."

This view can be characterized as the view of the first generation to be able to build their careers through the opportunities created from the social, economic and political change implemented since the early 1960s. Even though one can still observe residuals of traditional modes of thinking from time to time, this group does display a marked departure from that of their parents and grandparents relative to women's role in society. And as this man indicates, the men of the new generation are more inclined to help with domestic chores. It does not seem to have reached a level of equal distribution but at least men are making a contribution although he admits his wife still does most of the domestic work, he goes on to say that he doesn't see it as disproportionate.

Sharing domestic responsibilities is a new experience for Barbadian men. Some

are more receptive to this change as they recognize the additional responsibilities of a career spouse. From a more analytical standpoint, it is often revealed that many women undertake to do most of these chores. And it is not always that the man has reneged or ignored his responsibilities, but very often, the woman prefers to do these things because she has been socialized to think that she should be doing them. Furthermore, women sometimes perform these chores because they do not like the way in which the man does them, or the time he chooses to do them. But there is still a large number of men who share the traditional view that there is an inherent and intimate relationship between women and domestic responsibilities.

This male manager states that his wife and family have made a large contribution to his career growth and he confirms the argument that there is differential effect of family life on career men and women:

"... she [his wife] did not have time to go and pursue her own studies but it has not constrained me. When I was doing my first degree, I would say that the sacrifices were made by the family so that I could further my career. So in that regard, I am the beneficiary of the sacrifices. The whole family became the beneficiaries, ultimately. But in terms of my own personal career growth, I would say my family made that sacrifice."

Not many women seem to be playing this supportive role any longer. They are becoming more career oriented and no longer see themselves as dependents of their husbands or partners, to the extent that they are rearranging their priorities in a way that marriage and family life have been superseded by career development. And one woman explains this new approach:

"... in fact, women, from documentation that I have seen, are choosing to put off ... with new medical advances, women are putting off having children until as late as possible because they want to have established

themselves in a particular career. And *even in terms of marriage, they are putting that off until they get where they want to get in terms of a career.* Because quite often, marriage interferes with the type of career you would want for yourself, whereas men go ahead and do theirs. It doesn't interfere with the men's."

*"Marriage interferes with the type of career you would want for yourself..."* And because of the biological time constraints by which women are governed, it may be a good thing for a couple to focus on the woman's career first and then on the husband's but as this woman further points out, it does not work that way:

"Men go ahead and accomplish what they want to accomplish because of the biological fact that it's the woman who carries a child and the socialization women have had that they belong in the home. But women are now challenging this stereotype and are making other choices and they are going back to school. Even people who did not see themselves as university graduates before, are going back."

A new self perception seems to be the driving force behind this new way of thinking and indeed the work of the Women's Movement and various international and local women's organizations are making some impact. Coupled with this is the international status of some very prominent women, particularly those who are heads of state. And furthermore, the Governor-General of Barbados is a woman, Dame Nita Barrow.

Another man states that his career was not affected by his family life even though his wife was in the paid labour force. The extended family system facilitated his career growth: "I think I have been very fortunate from the point of view that my sister-in-law always played a major role in the upbringing of my children. My family is very close and we have maintained a good extended family relationship. When I was in England to study in 1980, my brother came and looked after my family, so I had no problems because there were always people around to give that kind of support."

The woman who is the director of one of the government agencies was very vocal about her observations in giving perspective on the issue:

"We are now trying to raise the level of consciousness of the gender component, so that the woman who is permanent secretary or managing an operation or her own business, and who has a family, her partner, unless she has been able to get across to him that 'o.k., I'm sharing and helping out at the economic level, then you also have to join forces with me to help out at the reproductive level and the roles associated with that, so that both of us can cope better'."

But she has discovered that men are not yet that cooperative and as a result women are over-burdened. "Women are doing three jobs ..." she states, "literally three or four and this has been documented also by the United Nations and the international agencies who are working with this development area." And maybe because of her involvement in women's issues at various levels in this society, she puts forward a very compelling case for women:

"Women are suffering from extreme fatigue, and I can speak for myself as such. Because it's full-time work in the productive sector, and when you go home, then you're in the reproductive sector and the associated roles there, and you have to do everything singlehandedly. And you know that for the Barbadian woman, where there is approximately 44% of women heading households, you know, she then goes back into her full-time job. But it's not only Barbadian women, but women throughout the region, throughout the world who have taken advantage of the thrust for development. They are getting up earlier in the morning to push forward their roles in the family, to get things going there, and they are out in the labour market. And then in the evening, they have to continue the reproductive roles which means that their periods for rest, for recreation, for other areas of development are significantly reduced."

*"Women are suffering from extreme fatigue".* A statement often used by women to characterize the situation of career women with families who generally carry the responsibility for the home and raising the family in addition to a full-time job outside



the home. Some of these women also undertake advanced training in order to facilitate career development. So that not only do they have very little time for recreation, but they complain of being very tired. Conversely, men in these families have time for recreation: they are able to have a night out with the boys, they attend various sporting events, or watch sports on television, and they generally enjoy more leisure time while the women remain at home.

### **Sexual Stratification**

The restructuring of the civil service is directly related to the increasing labour force participation of females including married women. Not so much in terms of the shape itself, but more importantly, in terms of its composition. Traditionally, men dominated the labour force and by virtue of this dominance, it was relatively easy for them to move into the top positions. More recently, global economic and social change has redefined the role of women in society, creating various niches for them in the workplace. But as time goes on and as the society becomes more responsive to this movement, women are attempting to transform the labour force into a more gender neutral structure by stepping out of their niches and into the malestream.

In Barbados, this transformation is noticeable in almost all job categorizations of the labour market. But although this has been occurring quite successfully for some years now, the movement of women into policy-making positions and other positions of power, seems to remain a challenge. Nevertheless, the process has started and the change in attitude has begun. The challenge is not only to overcome this barrier, but more

specifically, to educate and change society's attitude towards women -- a society that includes both women and men. One must remain conscious of the fact that the present system and attitude were in place for centuries and cannot be restructured overnight.

One of the professions where women have successfully (to some extent) penetrated is law and their move up the ladder is quite impressive. The chief registrar of the courts who is a woman and whose predecessors were all men, states: "I have been aware that people have come in and see me in here and are surprised it's a woman. But it's their concept of what a woman should do, it's not that a woman can't do it".

The police force is another area of the labour market that remained virtually male until the 1950s when the first group of women enrolled. From the 1950s to the present, they have made important progress and even though the force is still male-dominated, women do play an important role. One of the assistant commissioners, a male, in speaking about the first group of women that entered the force stated: "I would think that there were some reasonably good role models out of the first batch of people. And there was a particular woman, she's now deceased, who happened to be senior to those women. I believe that the standard she set is being emulated until this very day. I am satisfied that there is a real necessity for women in the force". And of the present female population in the force, he states:

"As it stands right now, the most senior of the women ... there are two of them who are the most senior ... they are inspectors. And the chances of becoming a gazetted officer, which is the assistant superintendent rank upwards, are very likely. We have had a female in here, one of those recruited in the first batch in the 1950s, who retired from service about two years ago at the rank of superintendent. Opportunities are here for our men and women. Some of the members pursue academic studies, and we had some of our men who have gone out to study law and among them is

a female who has qualified as a lawyer."

How do women perceive their role and their integration in the police force? The female police inspector gives a synopsis of her role:

"I am with the Brentford Division and my duties entail patrolling, supervising, and I also supervise the upper courts where I have a number of men who work for me on a day-to-day basis when the assizes are held. I have to assign them to three different courts and we work that, Monday to Friday."

And what is her experience in supervising men at this level in a male-dominated environment and career? "I find that the men react to women, I would say, more readily and easier than they would, men. Even if one of them has a problem, they have a tendency to come and discuss the problem with me, rather than going to another man."

This woman who is one of the two female police inspectors, felt that in spite of the male dominance and her loneliness in the position as female inspector, she enjoys her job: "My job satisfaction level is very high, it has gone right up. I was the first woman station sergeant who went on to be in charge of a police station, which normally always had a man." This woman who is single, and does not have a family of her own confessed that this was not deliberately planned, but is perhaps a consequence of her success in her career. It has become a common practice among women to forego the choice of marriage, and family, in order to pursue a career successfully.

Job opportunity in the police force seems to promote gender equality and it seems as though women are given the same opportunities to hold any position of which they are capable. But as the assistant commissioner further indicates, many of the decisions for appointments are made outside of the force itself, and though he thinks the opportunity

is there for a woman to become commissioner of police one day, he cautions:

"I don't want to tell you how many years from now but the opportunities are there. But as you know, there are certain decisions the higher up you go, are made, not necessarily within the organization, but outside the organization by the people that march, so it depends on how those people perceive the situation at the time."

The police force in Barbados has developed a system of female integration that can perhaps be used as a model for other institutions: although women make up only about 6.7% of the entire police force, approximately 3.3% are police inspectors, 6% are station sergeants, and 15% are sergeants (Barbados Staff List, 1990). The majority of the women (apx. 75%) are at the level of police constable, but indications are that women do have opportunities to move through the system, taking into account also that a woman had already reached the level of police superintendent. Doubtlessly, women's access to top positions will be governed by time in that they still represent a small percentage of the force, which keeps them at that numerical disadvantage.

How does the structure of the police force, traditionally a male institution, compare with an institution predominantly female? Since teaching has always been considered a female domain, perhaps it would be appropriate to examine the ministry of education for comparative purposes. Women have traditionally been the custodians of primary school children in the system and to a lesser extent, secondary level students. Does the structure of this system and its composition reflect a female dominance at the higher levels? The structure of the ministry of education remains still heavily male-dominated despite the efforts made by women to upgrade their qualifications, and in spite of the more qualified women going into the system.

The highest non-political position in a ministry is that of permanent secretary and in the ministry of education, both the position of permanent secretary and deputy permanent secretary are held by males. There are two senior administrative positions one of which is held by a woman, while the other is vacant. The office of financial controller is held by a man while two men and two women hold offices of administrative officer I. The other is vacant. The chief education officer and the deputy are male, but of the six senior education officer positions, one is held by a man, three by women, and two are vacant. Contrastingly, of the forty-seven clerical officer positions, twenty-six are held by females, twelve by males, and nine remain vacant.

At Erdiston Teachers' Training College, the principal is male and has a female deputy. Of the three senior tutors, there are two women and one man, whereas of the nineteen tutor positions, there are nine male, five female and five vacancies. For vocational training, the structure of the institution is also negatively skewed against women. The male principal has a female deputy and one male. But of the 58 instructors there are 29 males, 7 females, and as many as 22 vacant positions. These discrepancies, particularly at the polytechnic can be explained away, given the fact that the skills offered in training have long been associated with males and it has only been relatively recent that women have been given the necessary support and encouragement to seek a career in such vocations, hence the absence of women at the instructor level.

There remains however, some resentment by men to the progress women have been making and as one woman notes, they seem to misunderstand the whole issue:

"The men are united in their thoughts about us and what we should want. You know, a man from the Senate asked me 'what more do women

want?' But you see, there are some intellectual women who intellectualize the whole thing. This man told me that Ms. A. and her group said that we might soon have to abolish Women's Affairs that we don't really need it. What they mean is that we are now going away from just saying women's affairs ... but there is still a need because if you attack women's issues you are attacking everything else."

Despite the attention given to women's issues and the efforts made to bring them to the attention of those in policy-makers, there is an apparent element of ambivalence towards women, by policy-makers. The women's Bureau, originally named the Department of Women's Affairs, had been established under the umbrella of the Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development to address all issues concerning women, and in particular it seeks "to ensure that the principle of equality between men and women is complied with". But since its establishment in 1976 with a staff of three, no major efforts have been made to upgrade the services of the bureau. It was subsequently downgraded to the Bureau of Women's Affairs with its staff numbering its original three -- a director, a research assistant, and a typist. They find it difficult to cope with the rapidly increasing demands and issues which the bureau now faces. But reaction to the bureau itself has not always been positive, as the female director points out. It seems to agitate men to a great degree: "I don't think the men are accepting it. In fact I had a call from a man the other day saying that there's time for a *men's affairs department*". Perhaps this suggests that this man does not understand the issues that gave rise to the establishment of a women's bureau. The establishment of the department by government was seen as an attempt to bring women's issues to the political forefront, but since the opening staff has not been increased, it seems not to have generated much success.

Implicit in the man's call for a men's affairs department, is the serious need in Barbados to move the gender debate out of the confines of women's organizations and into the forums where social, political and economic issues are debated. It cannot only be women's groups involved in debating women's issues. Why? for one thing, women's issues involve men at the very core and secondly and perhaps more importantly, men are the policy-makers and need to be sensitized to the problems women experience in becoming integrated members of society. To restrict the debate to women's groups is to grossly misrepresent the International Women's Movement that strives incessantly to include women in the development process. Furthermore, women already know the issues. The reason they are debated is due to the fact that they remain issues as women are not in positions of power where they can change things or legislate changes. Therefore, if these issues are confined to female debates, not much can be accomplished in terms of effecting change. It is as much of interest to men as it is to women. It profoundly affects both groups, the family, and society as a whole. Thus, men need to be educated about the Movement and the issues and become involved in the change process in order to understand and respect the principles on which it operates.

### **Jobs and Gender Definitions**

Although the civil service had been for a long time considered one of the major occupational options for high school graduates, it nevertheless, always seemed to attract more males than females. Females generally went into nursing or teaching. What does this mean in terms of gender definitions being given to certain jobs in the civil service?

Nursing and teaching (primary level), perhaps due to their nurturing and caring characteristics, have been traditionally defined as female jobs regionally and locally. The civil service however, was more diverse with a wider range of career opportunities. And though certain jobs have persistently been held by males there are no real distinguishing characteristics that can really classify them as "male jobs".

In the past two or so decades women have adopted the civil service as a viable option for moulding a career, and with this increasing female participation the main distinguishing characteristics between men and women in the civil service revolve around the location of these two groups. Women now plan their careers more seriously so that the distance between the location of men and that of women in the workplace is being narrowed. For the most part, young women in the service occupied the lower levels of the structure and often remained there for extensive periods of time, while they watched their male counterparts come in and moved up, at a rapid rate. Was this occupational discrimination based on sex? It is perhaps, to a large degree but the basis for this bias was created back in the school system and in the home where boys were favoured over girls. Even when women were equally as or more qualified than men, they were held back while men progressed both in the private and public sectors.

It was a common occurrence for a female to enter the job market and more specifically the civil service at the entry level and remained there, sometimes even retiring at that level. But this was often a result of lack of qualification directly linked to sex discrimination and as one female director explains:

"It's the more assertive and qualified woman who will move on. You may start to work in a large department like national insurance and you could



stay there for ten years unless you are the person who will decide 'look, I'm not staying here for ten years'. You are going to ask for a transfer, and you are going to qualify yourself. And you are going to get the skills that you can negotiate with."

Statistics indicate that more women than men are indeed becoming more qualified and they are registering for higher degrees at Cave Hill Campus. This is supported by the following table.

**Table 4**  
**Registration for Higher Degrees**  
**By Faculty, By Sex, 1990/91**  
**Cave Hill Campus**

Faculty	Males		Females		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	
Arts & Gen Studies	20	42.5	27	57.5	47
Education	11	39.3	17	60.7	28
Medical Sciences	03	37.5	05	62.5	08
Natural Sciences	18	62.1	11	37.9	29
Law	04	33.3	08	66.7	12
Social Sciences	05	45.5	06	54.5	11

Source: Statistics obtained from Cave Hill Campus, UWI.

The above table shows that with exception of Natural Sciences, women outnumbered men in registration for higher degrees at Cave Hill Campus, for the academic year 1990/91. And even in Natural Sciences, they still accounted for 37.9% of registered students. The increasing number of women in classrooms of higher learning

is directly linked to the increasing number of women in the labour force and it points to the seriousness with which women are seeking equal rights. They are investing in higher levels of study in order to compete fairly. However, Table 5 indicates that at the diploma and certificate levels, women are largely concentrating on administration and management studies, with the majority of them in management and educational administration. Overall, women accounted for 47% of registration for diplomas and certificates at Cave Hill Campus in 1990/91 while men accounted for 53%.

**Table 5**  
**Registration for Diplomas & Certificates**  
**By Faculty, by Sex, 1990/91**  
**Cave Hill Campus**

Faculty	Males	Females	Total
In-Service Education	18	12	30
Public Administration	13	14	27
Management Studies	23	14	37
Environmental Studies	02	03	05
Maths & Computing*	03	01	04
Computing	03	06	09
Child Health*	01	-	01
Management & Admin.Ed.**	16	22	38
Labour Administration**	-	01	01
Social Work	04	01	05
Total	83	74	157

Note: \* = Advanced Diplomas  
 \*\* = Certificates

But with the emergence of continuing education and night school, more women in the workplace are exploiting opportunities to become more qualified and compete in their job situation as Table 5 indicates. This woman explains her observations:

"In the civil service, you find a lot of women are qualified. People come in now with degrees, and they do not remain ... they just do not stay at that level. They are looking for every opportunity to go back to school to do a master's and advanced professional training. So what we have is a lot more qualified persons. I do not think, unlike previously, they are being restricted by gender, because of the number of women that are doing law, the number of medical students, and the number of women that are doing engineering and those things that you never touched before."

The foregoing indicates the impetus with which women are asserting themselves in their quest for equality. It has become quite noticeable that not only are men being challenged but they feel challenged and it has become a matter of great concern in the workplace and in the school system. One social worker explains in succinct terms the changes that are taking place:

"I think there is an erosion of that male dominance in certain areas of work. I think that is what is often referred to in terms of 'men in crisis'. That more and more, all these places that were being held for them or reserved for them are now being encroached upon by women and the men are feeling ... I don't know if I can call it being undermined or insignificant in terms of not being able to dominate any more. They have to compete now. Not just with other men, but with women as well, and it seems that they did not mind competing with other men, but it seems to be a threat if they have to compete with women."

This new male attitude has attracted the attention of employers, policy-makers and school administrators, alike. Generally, the perception is that women pose a serious threat to men in terms of professional competition. What everyone seems to be overlooking or is oblivious to, is the reason why so many women are participating in the paid labour force. Economic demands on the family income brought a large number of women into the

labour market. And this included many women who would have preferred to stay home and raise their children. Emerging at a time when the extended family had already transformed into the nuclear family, it has drastically restructured the whole concept of family and childrearing, and creating in the process the daycare industry. Women have not gone into the paid labour market to become a threat to men. Their participation is a consequence of economic necessity that has also worked to share the economic burden that some men carried alone. So that the very men who are said to complain and see women as a threat, also have wives or partners in the labour force. Of the sixty men in the various professions studied, all who were married had a working wife.

This perceived threat by women is being taken seriously as early as at the school level where a full coeducational system was created in the 1970s. One woman points out that women are being blamed for men's attitudes: "men are now blaming the fact that there are so many women teachers, for some of the things the boys are doing. They are saying now that coeducation is doing something to the boys." Another woman states that when it comes to politics, women were still very far behind in terms of aspirations and in her mind they had created their own glass ceiling:

"I don't know that apart from the handful of women we have here who have gone into politics that any of them have ever ... even the ones who have gone in, have gone in with any aspirations of becoming prime minister of this country. They still limit themselves. All men have not gone in with those aspirations either, but they still have the reassurance that a man is going to take that job. One of their kind is going to take that job. I do not know if any female politician in Barbados has ever seriously aspired to being prime minister."

This would therefore indicate that even though women in Barbados are perceived as posing a serious threat to the position of men in society, their threat or competition

for that matter, is executed within certain boundaries of the social system. Perhaps too, their strategy is to proceed in stages, guaranteeing success at each individual stage, so maybe the ultimate challenge is not yet within the vision of the general population. And this woman gives her perspective on the strategies women are utilizing to make their demands: "...I don't believe men will let them take over, but they are going to agitate for more and more changes, to be given equal recognition and equal rights. And I don't mean just equal rights in the courts, I mean in terms of power". And what implications does this hold for women and men in the workplace?

"If there is a position available and there is a man and a woman equally qualified for it, then it will come to the point where you will have to ignore the gender and look at who is really capable of doing the job."

How does she think this will affect the structure of those previously defined male jobs?

"It will have to change. It will change. Look at the number of women going up on electricity poles. Women are now doing all these things which before you never saw women doing."

Women are still found at the lower levels in the system. Secretarial, stenographer/typist and clerk/typist positions are still largely female jobs. For example, in the ministry of legal affairs, of the twelve positions filled under the titles of stenographer/typist and clerk/typist, none were occupied by men. At the clerical officer level, of the 29 positions, women occupied 17, men took 8, while the others were vacant. In the ministry of foreign affairs, at the level of senior foreign service officer, there is a ratio of 6:3 favouring males, with four positions vacant. However, at the clerical officer level, there exists a ratio of 4:1 favouring females.

Women in the civil service can be categorized into two groups. One which involves women demanding equal rights, equal educational opportunity and equal job opportunity. These are women who can be characterized as the new wave of women, their mothers, though extremely dynamic and effective behind the scenes, were not sufficiently militant or vocal and due also to the unequal distribution of resources, did not obtain their rightful place in society. They are the ones who have assisted in creating the path for generational change for women, through their own sacrifices and foresight in raising their daughters.

The other group of women in the civil service may be characterized as women who are not fully career oriented and consequently, they are not as assertive as the other group. They need the security of a job and are perhaps not concerned in undertaking night school and juggling responsibilities at home in order to meet the increasing challenges of the labour market. Quite often, this reluctance for career growth is driven by domestic commitment and responsibilities. But this type of individual can be found in the private sector as well, and the characteristics of these two groups described can also be found among some males, but perhaps to a lesser extent.

Women who fall into the second group will most often be found in the same situation or job classification for many years and promotion will likely be very slow. The more assertive, qualified and dynamic female will demonstrate progress in much the same way that men do but achieving it will be more difficult for them, as women. It is at the higher levels in the service that the male dominance is being challenged as women seek out more high profile positions. Women will occupy most positions of permanent

secretary in the future, men and women contend, given their present location in the system.

But with the new positioning of women an important question arises: are women and men responding well to women in senior positions? Some think not, and in blaming much of it on early socialization, one woman states:

"There is no networking with women. Women find it hard to get along with women. I do not know why it is, but women do not like to see other women succeed. A woman will go into a situation with a man as her boss and she will accept it. He can make certain remarks and they will not bother the woman. But if another woman as boss, gives her that same directive, it annoys her. But I think it all comes back to socialization."

Men have always been in the role as boss and perhaps women are subconsciously reacting to that. According to this woman, it is the experience of the female that supports this ambivalent attitude, because women are demanding an equal place alongside men. Yet, not all women respond well when women are successful as this woman indicates.

"In the home, the father was or still is the boss. It wasn't seen as a shared partnership where you discussed decisions to be made. The husband/father made the decisions and he would tell the wife/mother 'this is what such and such a child is supposed to do and this is what I want'. And when you transfer that to the workplace, then you will see that a woman will readily and easily accept what a man says because this is what she came up with and saw her mother accepting. So she will accept it in the workplace too. That is why I believe a woman feels better or more comfortable having a man as a boss. I don't think it is downright hate for women but it is a consequence of socialization."

The female director, projected a more neutral analysis of the changing role of women in society. She agrees that women had become more aggressive in advancing their own development, and feels that men are now reacting negatively:

"...the other thing is that I see it as a source of concern and has been mentioned as such, not that they [men] don't want women to progress or

to stop progressing, or to stop aspiring for achievement, but it is now being said that the women's aggressive approach to their own development in creating a negative reaction from men, in terms of their own ambitions, and their own motivation. I am rejecting that, and a number of women are. Some bright thinking men are and there has been a lot of discussion in the society in the last year or two about this phenomenon -- the fact that men are literally dropping out of being as productive and competitive as they should be."

This will explain the persistence of gender differences in the labour market as they continue to be perpetuated in the home. But from the male perspective, one man cites socialization as well but makes his analogy quite differently: "men tended to demonstrate more leadership or aspirations for leadership positions than women. They tended to apply for more of the positions that are going than the woman." And in explaining women's approach to the situation he states:

"Of course, the positions sometimes asked for specific qualifications which meant that the woman would have had to do management, and would obviously have to go off somewhere and study and all of that. And for the reasons I advanced earlier, this cultural thing intended them to be in the home looking after their kids. But this pattern is changing very much now."

One male manager who has teenaged children gives this perspective of the situation:

"All my teacher friends and all of my observations tell me that these young men are opting out. They are not even taking the responsibility for being form captain. The girls are doing much better, academically too. And I don't go for this thing that the boys will develop by the time they are 14 (years of age) because by then, they will be far behind. The ultimate is that now, at Foundation (School) the principal has started all male classes and all female classes in the first form. It has gotten that bad."

Could this mean a transfer of power to women in the future? Are men really in crisis and are they relinquishing their power base? Using a cyclical analysis, a female



personnel manager explains that "it's going to follow the same cycle that a lot of women are going to get put back down a few years from now because men feel that there is too much competition from women and they are going to join forces in getting back tougher." She argues that women were setting no limits for themselves and the men felt that if they didn't try to limit women, "soon from now they'll be looking at the next woman who is going to be prime minister of Barbados". But not everyone detected such high aspirations among the women, even though they challenged men at almost every level.

A male, involved in the skills development of the youth indicates that the whole process of development is definitely having some impact on young men.

"The level of unemployment among the males, although it's not as high as among the females is still increasing and one of the contributing factors has been identified as the increasing presence of the female in the labour market."

How should men cope with this encroachment? "... Males must now decide to shift or try to penetrate the areas that were traditionally considered as female. This will facilitate reduction of inequality in society. If there is cross integration into male and female domains, it will offer more opportunities to both sexes and it will serve to free the society of some of the stereotypes and gender definitions attached to certain jobs. It could also pave the way for equality of opportunity in the labour market.

## **Conclusion**

There is a gender distinction made in the civil service between the way women and men experience their jobs. Men spoke of being upwardly mobile, whereas women

found that they were held back due to stagnation and routine jobs that do not always require brain power to perform. But they linked much of this discrimination in the system that excluded women previously and the process of promotion in place "...If there are supposed to be 20 permanent secretaries, and they are already there, they are men. You just don't move them to put a woman...in another 10 years we will have a few women...". This is not articulated as sex discrimination but the result of a policy of exclusion "...I feel that if a woman shows that she's good, there's no way that they can keep her down....It happens occasionally, but that is not the norm now...", according to a female department manager. But another highly placed woman disagrees "...while it was felt that women came into the public service much later than men, that stage where women were not at the catching up point, should have worked itself out a long time ago...", and others discuss it in terms of discrimination "...They look at the feminine side of a woman instead of looking to see if she can really handle the job. So you have to display masculine tendencies..." And another woman acknowledged changes in the system "... We now have equal salary for equal work and quite recently ... they have made it possible for women to take their spouses on long leave ... which is awarded after you have worked a certain number of years..." And men are hostile towards women who seek upward mobility "... the woman now wants to indicate that she has a penis too and there is a lot of attempted castration on the part of females...", and the other who saw them as "...lesbians, either divorced or single, and are frustrated, and miserable."

Women and men reported different sources and levels of job satisfaction. Women for instance derived theirs from client interaction:

"...Job satisfaction was knowing that you are providing a service, helping someone make a decision ... So when you speak about job satisfaction, when I was in cash it could be measured by customers' responses. Now it's meeting deadlines and to me that's not something to relish, it is something that adds to stress. My job is neither challenging nor is it fulfilling."

And for the social worker? "... I would say it has its ups and downs.... There are times when I accomplish something and it makes me feel good that I have been able to help this person..." But men articulate job satisfaction differently, it seems more personal as an assistant police commissioner indicates "... I believe that I did exceptionally well or reasonably well in the training centre. ... And I have been like that almost throughout my career..." The chief nursing officer was equally specific "... Yes by and large I am very satisfied... Yes I would say I get job satisfaction ... I have been able to do a number of things which have been able to upgrade the human resource capability as a system in general...". While men were able to move on and become innovative, women felt they were held back by family responsibilities and were exhausted from carrying the double load "... Domestic life intercepts my usual dedication and commitment to my job. But it affects my husband equally as much..." but where he has had a promotion every three years, she has had one in ten. And a male senior administrator felt that family life affects the woman more "... Women still have to bear children and they still have to raise them... so even in a sharing arrangement, I would think women still have a greater burden in terms of pursuing a career and raising a family." A male manager corroborates this "... she [his wife] did not have time to go and pursue her own studies but it has not constrained me..." In spite of the disparities, women feel that men do not welcome the challenge that women are promoting, so says the social worker "I think there is an

erosion of that male dominance in certain areas of work...what is often referred to in terms of 'men in crisis'..." but the female director disagrees it is due to women's 'aggressive approach' "... that men are literally dropping out of being as productive and competitive as they should be." And a male manager agrees "All my teacher friends and all of my observations tell me that these young men are opting out..."

In spite of the progress women have made through new job opportunities, it will take them some time before they can share equally with men in the civil service due to the fact that men hold the more senior positions by virtue of their early participation in the system. Some women felt held back even though they were equally qualified, while some men expressed hostility towards women who were upwardly mobile. The pressures of family life intercepted women's careers while they had no effect on men's, and women were generally "suffering from extreme fatigue" while no men did. Except for the chief nursing officer, most men identified personal career progress with their level of job satisfaction but women associated theirs with intrinsic gratification.

## **Chapter 6**

### **University Teaching**

Since the establishment of the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies in Barbados in 1963, university teaching has become one of the leading professions in the country, particularly for men. But more recently, the increasing number of university trained women, brings more diversity to the teaching staff as women are now making it their profession as well. However, there is an emergence of gender divisions in the system where women contend there are discriminated against in terms of promotions and senior administrative positions. Men and women define and measure job satisfaction differently: women point to students' participation and results as a source of job satisfaction, men indicate academic life and freedom, and research as sources of job satisfaction. Perception of sex discrimination varies between the two groups. Men felt there was none while women pointed to various situations where they felt they experienced it or observed it. Women faculty who juggle the roles of career and family find it extremely difficult to cope, while others have decided not to marry and have children. Men are not guided by these constraints but one academic father stated that his career has been intercepted because of family life, while it did not affect his wife's.

In this chapter we examine the factors that influence career choice and career aspirations, upward mobility rates for men and women, and job satisfaction. An analysis

will be made of the effect family life has on the careers of male and female faculty, the structure of the institution, and the way in which some jobs have remained gender defined in the system.

The study was initially planned to have a sample of 10 men and 10 women from faculties randomly selected at Cave Hill. But due to the fact that the data were collected during the summer and early fall of 1991, some faculty members were away while others were very involved with registration and therefore were not accessible. In view of this, I was only able to obtain interviews from ten men and five women, which to some extent reflects the disproportionate representation of women on faculty. Two of the women were single and three were married, two of whom had children. There were two senior lecturers, two lecturers and one assistant lecturer. One was also dean of her faculty. They ranged in age from the early thirties to the late fifties and their teaching experience varied between two and fifteen years at Cave Hill campus. Some had lectured for many years in other countries.

Of the ten men, one was single, one was divorced, and eight who were married, all had children. One man was a deputy dean and one was head of his department. They ranged in age from the early thirties to early fifties and their years' of experience ran from five to sixteen years. Like the women, some of the men had teaching experience in other countries. The sample came from the departments of economics, mathematics, political science, sociology/social work, history, education, and the faculty of law. The reporting of data will vary slightly in this section, due to the fact that some of the responses to the questions were not clearly separated. As a result, responses became

intertwined with more than one question.

Men generally dominated the teaching staff at the university from the inception of the campus, and still do. But with the increasing number of female faculty, women are beginning to hold senior academic and administrative positions. In one faculty for instance, there is a female dean and a female department head and in 1990/91 academic year, four (or 10%) of the Academic Board were women. There was also one woman among the six representatives from Cave Hill on the University Academic Committee, and four on the 33-member Campus Council. Though these are indicators of small changes numerically, their significance lies not so much in numbers but in breaking the ground and creating the space from which they can agitate for more female representation. Further to this, it provides the opportunity for women to demonstrate their capabilities at that level. At the main campus, Mona, Jamaica, a woman was appointed pro vice-chancellor in 1991. These are all important indicators that women are moving up and into, a once male-dominated institution. However, it should be emphasized that this study relates specifically to the cave Hill Campus where the data were collected<sup>1</sup>.

Despite the large female representation at the undergraduate level, as shown in Table 6, women in 1990/91 accounted for 70.8% of total registered undergraduates in Arts and General Studies, 57% in Social Sciences, 47.4% in medical science, 38% in

---

<sup>1</sup> For an excellent comprehensive assessment of the situation of women in the University of the West Indies see Cartey, Linda E. (1988). The Political Economy of Gender Inequality at the University of the West Indies. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto, Ontario.

Natural Sciences and 46.4% of students registered in Law (Cave Hill Campus statistics, 1991), Cave Hill Campus is, to a large extent, controlled academically and administratively by males. Men outnumber women in both the teaching and administrative positions by far, in almost every faculty, even in those where females dominate the student population.

In the Faculty of Arts and General Studies, 1991-1992 academic year, four departments were all headed by men, and had a female student population of 70.8% but women accounted for only 21% of faculty, while in the Faculty of Social Science men accounted for 71.2% of faculty positions and women 20.8%. Of the eight officers in the registry, only two were women. But support services remain a female dominated area: the 10 support staff were all female (Faculty of Arts & General Studies Handbook, 1991-1992). Why the female dominance at the student level? The female pursuit of higher level academic qualifications in Barbados is quite consistent with trends observed in the United States and Canada, and perhaps Britain. But in Barbados, it has been explained by the fact that among the new university applicants annually, females are consistently much better qualified than the male applicants. And this can be traced right back to the 11-plus examination where girls have to perform better than boys to obtain a place in the same secondary schools (Browne, 1986). So it would seem that competitive edge serves them well and remains with them right through university where career choices are often made.



**Table 6**  
**Academic Enrolment for Selected Years**  
**By Faculty, By Sex**  
**Cave Hill Campus**

Faculty	1983/84			1992/93		
	M	F	No.	M	F	No.
Arts/Gen.Studies	32.0	68.0	431	25.8	74.2	592
Education	43.7	56.3	71	39.5	60.5	109
Law	48.5	51.5	299	38.7	61.3	377
Medical Sciences	-	-	-	65.0	35.0	60
Natural Sciences	60.6	39.4	363	57.4	42.6	458
Social Sciences	46.2	53.8	500	37.6	62.4	915
Total Number	46.0	54.0	1664	39.3	60.7	2511

Source: Adapted from statistics obtained from UWI, Cave Hill Campus, 1992.  
 These figures include both full-time and part-time students.

It is not only enrolment patterns that give women the edge over men, it is also academic outcome. Table 7 below shows that women surpassed men in degrees awarded in 1988 (latest statistics available). This holds true for Arts and General Studies, Social Sciences, and Law. And in the Sciences where women were perceived to be foreign, they received one third of the degrees awarded in Natural Sciences and Engineering. In medicine they received 16.7% of degrees awarded that year but enrolment patterns indicate that they will by-pass men since they have accounted for at least 50% of medical students in more recent years.

**Table 7**  
**First Degrees Awarded by Faculty,**  
**by Sex, Cave Hill Campus, 1988**

Faculty	Males		Females		Total Number
	No.	%	No.	%	
Arts & Gen. Studies	16	25.4	47	74.6	63
Social Science	23	37.7	38	62.3	61
Education	1	50.0	1	50.0	2
Law	6	46.2	7	58.8	13
Natural Sciences	34	66.7	17	33.3	51
Medicine	10	83.3	2	16.7	12
Agriculture	2	100.0	-	-	2
Engineering	2	66.6	1	33.3	3

Source: Statistics obtained from Cave Hill Campus, UWI, Barbados.

### **Career Choice and Career Aspirations**

Both men and women got involved in university teaching for different reasons and were all influenced by a variety of factors. The women varied widely in terms of how their careers were determined. One knew she never wanted to do anything else but teach. Another felt that the school indirectly pushed her into teaching while the other three felt that it was due to prevailing circumstances. The woman who was confident about having a teaching career states:

"I've never wanted to do anything else, perhaps there was nothing else in my day. You see, there wasn't any choice. You really had two choices, teaching or nursing. In those days, women did not branch out into other fields. I couldn't be a nurse because every time I went to the hospital I

would become sick or something like that. I couldn't stand the sight of blood. I could do it now but it was a long time before I could do that."

*"You really had two choices, teaching or nursing. In those days, women did not branch out into other fields."* This statement has been reiterated frequently by women across the professions studied. It serves to emphasize that women in all the professions have been victims of exclusionary policies on a hidden agenda that worked against them. And the statement of restriction in careers, is more often articulated by women at the upper end of the age range identified. One woman, high in the administrative structure states her situation:

"When I left school, I just wanted to go and work. I didn't feel my family could keep me studying any longer, and I wanted to go and work. So I worked in Barclays Bank and then people kept telling me 'you should be in university' ... with eight O's and two A's [Cambridge Certificates] and that kind of thing, you know, that's where you belong'. And it was a matter of thinking and telling myself, 'oh yes, maybe'. And I like to study and so I was never forced to study. Studying was something I liked to do so the idea of going to the university, I thought it was something I wanted to do."

Yet another woman seemed guided by stereotypes and the traditional outlook of her mother. But as she matured, she developed her own direction in a very successful way. She states:

"my brothers wanted to be doctors, and they became doctors. I can't tell you that anybody ever told me that I wasn't to become a doctor, but I think it was always assumed that I would do nicer work like teaching or nursing, or the traditional women's work. Plus the school played a great part in determining and informing and lending a vision to the type of career I went after. A lot of us were steered into the arts rather than the sciences, so that being a doctor, being a lawyer, in a sense, was out of the question. Higher education was even unavailable for us which meant going away and all it meant financially."

*"...it was always assumed that I would do nicer work like teaching or nursing..."*

Clearly, her socialization prepared her for the traditional female role in the workplace of teacher or nurse. But even though she matured into that context to some extent, she has taken her role of teaching to its maximum. And by so doing, she has challenged and has overcome the barriers that would have limited her to elementary school teaching, because in those days, teaching for women implied being an elementary school teacher. Being the only girl among three children, she recognized that she was treated differently and it seems she had accepted that. She did not aspire to become a doctor because she was socialized to think that doctors were men. She further explained the extent to which her mother held this notion. She continues: "I remember my mother saying why would they spend all this money on me because I was going to get married. At least that is what she wanted for me at that point any way. And I remember my father saying 'no she's going to high school'. And those words were very strong." But although this ambition for his daughter fell short of what was established for his sons, it surpassed by far, that which her mother held for her, and laid the foundation for her own future personal ambitions. She goes on to detail the environment in which she was raised:

"I came from a family where my mother was a traditional housewife, who didn't get much beyond grade school, but who knew almost from the beginning that she wanted her sons to be doctors and not the daughters. I don't even know if she knew what chemistry was or physics or any of the other biological sciences were about. But she wanted that for her sons. When my son was born [at home] in England, one of the first things she said as she walked into my bedroom the next morning was 'how is the doctor this morning?'."

Stereotypical? This synonymous relationship between men and doctors was profoundly pervasive in West Indian society at the time and was perhaps no different in England. Men and women just did different jobs. And even as recently as 30 years ago,

this woman was still in the same mental time-frame by seeing her one-day old grandson in a traditionally "male" profession. But this is not a unique situation: parents and grand parents entertained ambitions for their daughters and sons and their grand-daughters and grand-sons, which were completely different, based on sex. And in terms of educational pursuit, the disbursement of the family resources for education reflected these expectations and ambitions as well: boys were almost always given the advantage over girls to obtain the higher levels of education. By stating that *"I came from a family where my mother was a traditional housewife"*, adequately explains her mother's expectations of her sons and her grandson which were only the verbal expression of her outlook and ultimately, her compliance with the patriarchal structures to which she had become so accustomed. The statement also helps to provide the social context in which her mother was raised.

One man always wanted an academic profession. He explains:

"I always wanted to be a teacher. I think my interest in academia grew largely by my choice of occupation. I started off being a teacher and did very well there, and had always known that I had to go to university. So I think it had to do with my own perception, my own beliefs about myself, my own motivation, and it was not anything that was externally influenced."

And both men and women recorded career indecision in much the same way. Some of them got into academia quite accidentally, others simply didn't know in which direction they had to go. A male lecturer in the mathematics department talks about how he came to be in mathematics as opposed to his initial career ambition of being a doctor. He explains:

"All through school I wanted to be a doctor. From early. That's all I wanted because I knew that in those days, if you're bright you won't think of becoming an economist. I don't think I was good enough to be a scholar, an island scholar, and I didn't see myself having the money to go into medicine. So I went and worked for a year. And after working for a year, I knew that I had to go to university. So it was a question of what to do. Maths was always my line. I did science at A level, but I didn't want to do any more science."

"All through school I wanted to be a doctor. From early. That's all I wanted..." That his career indecision revolved around economic factors, is acknowledged, for in spite of his early desire to become a doctor, he lacked the necessary support, both financial and parental. And it was long-term goals he entertained as he left his first job after a year, to pursue his studies. He went on to explain that his ambition to become a doctor was his own and he was never persuaded by his parents:

"My old man, never yet, in all his life, told me he wanted me to become this or that. Neither did my mother. So it was not a case of anybody pressuring me. But my old man was always keen about education. I would say I got my love for maths from him. I did my first degree here in maths and was lucky enough to win a scholarship."

Yet he had the desire all through school to become a doctor even in the absence of parental persuasion, but economic factors intercepted his ambition and his desire. This points indirectly to the differential effect of socialization on boys and girls. Boys were encouraged to become doctors and some did. But of interest here is that even when they were not encouraged some still aspired to such a career because their socialization made them believe it was something that men did. It can be seen that males gravitated towards the sciences either through their parents' influence or their own personal ambition.

According to this man, girls were discouraged from doing maths in very profound and sometimes inconspicuous ways, not only in the home but in the school system also,

as this man further explains:

"Girls and maths always seemed to be in conflict. Girls were supposed to do English and those sorts of things. Not many girls became doctors, because there are not many women doctors over age 50. Most women doctors are in the early 40s, o.k.? So maths was almost a luxury, meaning girls did history and English and those things. They weren't supposed to become engineers. And a lot of girls were allowed to drop maths. But in Harrison College, Combermere, all of them [boys' schools], you did maths as a matter of course, whether you were good at it or not, you were going to do maths at 'O' level."

*"Girls and maths always seemed to be in conflict."* The inaccuracy of this sexist statement is couched in the fact that girls were never encouraged to do maths. This man further explains that *"girls were allowed to drop maths"*; but in the case of the boys, "you did maths ... whether you were good at it or not, you were going to do maths at 'O' level ...", whether you were in conflict with maths or not! These methods of exclusion and inclusion based on gender or more specifically, educational discrimination based on sex, amounts to a stereotypical approach to job training and job segregation and a division of labour in society, based on gender. Boys and girls were "educated" for different jobs, which was fostered in the home and indelibly reinforced in the school.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Both men and women gave a variety of responses to the question of job satisfaction in university teaching and many stated explicitly or implicitly that they were not totally satisfied in their jobs. One young woman, relatively new in the profession, speaks about her satisfaction from the job and how it is derived. She states:

"The first year was very rewarding. I had some very good students and I think at the end of the year, I felt it was very good. Last year when I

began, I was depressed. I think it all has to do with students' participation. But by the end of the year, some of the students were pretty good, so I enjoyed it. This year, well, it's only two semesters, but it looks like it's going to be a good year."

Job satisfaction for this woman is derived in part, from her students' class participation and from their success. In other words, she alone, does not determine her happiness in her job and she allows it to hinge, to some extent, on her student's involvement. This way, she has been able to compare her semesters in terms of success. Her level of success helps to determine her level of job satisfaction.

Another woman contends that the operations of the old boys' network and the external responsibilities that women have to carry, will help to determine their level of job satisfaction. She explains:

"I do know that there's always the old boys' network, o.k.? The men, they go and have a beer together at lunch time. They go out in the evening together. The women go home to make supper. So you are cut off from where a lot of decisions and discussions take place. One is cut off from that and the woman would relate to the work that she's given. But the politics of the job, she's often not available to be part of politics, particularly if she has responsibilities at home. I don't know how we are able to do it -- to stay on the job and be doing so many things. If you take in politics, 'cause we haven't started to play the political game yet. We don't have time for it. So I suppose we don't move along as fast in the corridors of power. And we just have to do the best we can with the job."

*"The men, they go and have a beer together..." "The women go home to make supper..."*

Work relationships between women and men are different and the old boys' network is perhaps partially responsible for this difference. Women's experience in the workplace is more recent and not as organized in the context of a network. Women go home and take on the traditional housewife/mother role while men are able to go out and become socializing buddies. Thus further indicating a male bonding which serves them well in



the network processes in terms of opportunities, promotion, privilege, and status, and the dissemination of information. This woman takes job satisfaction to a higher dimension and addresses the hidden barriers around which women have to work. She sees the old boys' network and the male things from which women are excluded such as going for a beer after work, as critical mechanisms for career development and progress, but from which women cannot benefit due to the other pressing demands to which they must attend. She uses the term "playing politics" to characterize a role in these activities and in the network.

Clearly, women are at a disadvantage for two fundamental reasons: in the first instance, women's participation in these male activities such as having a drink at lunch and after work, would certainly be frowned upon, and may even be misinterpreted. Secondly, women are intricately caught up in the bind of career and family that, had they been welcomed in these social activities, their other responsibilities may have denied them that opportunity and ultimately limit their involvement in office politics.

Job satisfaction for some women does not always correlate with success. One woman, very successful in her academic career, brings an intimate dimension to her job satisfaction:

"I got enthusiastic late in teaching. I still would tell you that it's not my first love. When I think of the beginning of the term and going back to teaching, it is not something I look forward to. Once I get in the classroom I am comfortable because I like the subject I teach. If I had to teach something else maybe I would quit. But actually what keeps me going right now is the position I hold. I like administrative work. I like business, running it, organizing meetings and chairing meetings and things like that ... If I'm not enthusiastic about it, I'm not doing it. If I don't have the enthusiasm it is too much a strain and a strain on my family as well, and I can't afford to live under that kind of strain."

In spite of this confession, it is clear that this woman still enjoys her job. She likes the subject she teaches and she likes administrative work, which occupies much of her time on all the campuses attending meetings and so on. She presents herself as conflicted in her roles and it seems as though her success in teaching provides her with the administrative opportunities ... the jobs she really prefers.

Another woman, with a wealth of experience in her career states:

"I'm not satisfied. I am not satisfied with my job. During the four-year period, there has been a serious decline in satisfaction. How am I coping with that? Unless the university changes, and unless the university is able to get additional money to bring on staff within the department and so on, I don't see any movement for me in what I'm doing. I'll tell you specifically, I was hired as a lecturer, but my responsibilities are administration. I came thinking that I was actually going to be heading a program. It would have been comparable to the dean of the particular school. But having come to the situation, I was confronted with the reality that there was no such entity. It was an appendage to something. Which meant there was no power, no authority, no nothing."

*"I'm not satisfied with my job ... there has been a serious decline in satisfaction".*

Conditions have become progressively worse for this woman, and there seems to be no indication that improvement in the short-term can be worked out. Another source of irritation is the fact that she had been hired as a lecturer but has been put into an administrative position. Is this kind of trauma gender specific? Would this have happened to a man?

Men varied in their views on job satisfaction articulating differences which contrast women's views and even a divergence among themselves. One man gives another description of job satisfaction, pointing out that even though the job is good, external variables could easily influence whether or not he enjoys that job:

"I think part of job satisfaction is also largely related to where the man is located within his own family. If he's the breadwinner, or his wife earns nearly as much or more than he is and so on. Because in a sense, some men would find it most uncomfortable if the wife is earning more, and hence, increasingly because of that, having more authority in organizing family finances. Not having that sort of power leverage, it would be difficult. In my situation it's almost as if the essential part of discipline is left to me to deal with when I come home. And even taking major decisions on if to buy a car and so on. Things like this are virtually left to me. And I would object to these decisions being taken away from me. A lot of males would object to losing such roles."

He further explains the relationship between a power base in the home and job satisfaction in the job:

"Job satisfaction is different. If they [men] are being promoted, if they have status. If that status is higher than their wife's status, then they get more public recognition. When the wife is not at that level, they get more satisfaction. When they are in competition or if they're equalized, a lot of men would find themselves increasingly more comfortable. If the man is married to a professional woman, and he has been socialized in such a way that he finds it difficult to become really a man in the circumstances or in the traditional male behaviour as the authority figure in the home. Whereas the wife can share this, and not only share it, but assume it, without asking."

This moves the debate from one between men and women in the workplace to one between husband and wife. It becomes a more personal and competitive struggle not just in terms of job satisfaction but more specifically in terms of power and it implies that job satisfaction is an extension of satisfaction in the home. Job satisfaction therefore becomes political: In some professions, women have said that they sometimes prefer to stay down to avoid surpassing their husband because some men cannot handle their wife earning more or being more successful than they are.

Similarly, a man gives a clear indication that his job satisfaction is derived from a number of variables associated with the position as well as from the job itself. He

explains:

"The reason why I'm here is because I enjoy academic life. That's really the first thing. I enjoy the freedom that it confers. It is a different regime of accountability entirely. There is a certain sense in which academics have a certain amount of sovereignty over what you teach and how you teach it. Naturally, I mean you have to ensure that you maintain the traditions of being an academic of honesty, fairness, and so on. But the accountability is a very different kind."

*"I enjoy academic life"* is a statement that has not been made in such a direct manner by any of the women or even the other men. Women have experiences and concerns in the same jobs that seem to militate against this kind of satisfaction. This man also states "I enjoy the freedom that it confers". But are women able to recognize and enjoy that freedom in the same way and to the same extent? It appears that women have a different experience in the university in that they articulate this freedom differently, even when they were in a faculty for several years and have achieved a relatively high level of success.

There are also faculty members whose job satisfaction is not so pronounced. For instance, one man, who is strategically placed in the university and in the wider society, presented mixed feelings of job satisfaction and how his satisfaction is manipulated by the institution itself. He states:

"I am relatively pleased with what I'm allowed to do. I'm dissatisfied with the intellectual climate within the institution which, I think, is not developed. I believe that the whole aura of scholarship needs to be developed in this university. But on the other hand, I am aware it's a young university in a small society and so, however, I am pleased with what I'm allowed to do and the way I try to do it. I'm a little unhappy with the wider context, because I believe that much more can be done with the scarce resources that we have, and I don't think they are being used to maximum effect. I think there is a lot of laziness in the university. I think there is a lot of indifference to scholarship ... so in terms of job

satisfaction, I enjoy my field, I like researching and writing and discussing [the discipline] publicly. But it would be much more effective if there were lots of us doing it."

*He is relatively pleased with what he is allowed to do.* Does this imply that this man may be experiencing inner conflict? On the one hand he has goals, he has dreams, not for himself but for his role in the university and he has to struggle with that desire and the constraints by which he is forced to operate. And although he states he is "relatively pleased", this pleasure is conditioned by what he is "allowed to do". So he is successful to some extent in obtaining some freedom. But it is a freedom much more controlled than, and sharply contrasts with that to which one of his male colleagues referred when he said "I enjoy the freedom that it [academic life] confers". In the first quote, "freedom" seems to be in reference to imparting knowledge; in the second instance, it seems to be encompassing a whole range of variables: the flexibility of the job, time schedules, accountability, course material and the imparting of it. So that as one man struggles to adjust to a system he finds perhaps confining and in need of reform, the other makes the most of it as it is, and enjoys it to its maximum. The less happy man is locked into a situation where even though he enjoys his work as it is performed both inside and outside the university, he appears to be alone as there are not many others with the same level of commitment and he believes the university can achieve more. He even states that he felt there was "indifference to scholarship" among his colleagues and that there was "laziness in the university". One can perhaps make a correlation between what he says and the first woman who spoke about deriving much of her job satisfaction from her students' success. This man's satisfaction, to some extent, revolves around

commitment to scholarship, not only his own, but that of his colleagues as well.

Men and women in university teaching enjoy their job to varying degrees. Some are disillusioned with the politics of the institution, and the constraints by which their participation is governed. As a result, there is a measure of job dissatisfaction across the disciplines studied. None of this dissatisfaction however, seems to originate from a dislike for academia, but instead, it is derived from factors that impede progress, performance, and ultimately satisfaction. Factors which can all be addressed to enhance job satisfaction. And perhaps this quote from a male professor emphasizes the general feeling: *"I do know that there should be some thorough investigation of job satisfaction in the faculty.* Because I detect that there is quite a lot of frustration and morale is not all that high. I think that is across the board. *I think probably the major grouse is the lack of promotional opportunities".* This is from a man who has attained the professorship level, so he is addressing the situation of others.

While both men and women vary in their reported satisfaction with academic life, and record a wide range of criteria by which they assess it -- students' performance and success, joining faculty late as a second career, flexibility of hours and structured holidays -- none the less women face specific problems that men do not, notably the double load, putting the career on hold, deciding not to marry and have children, the exclusion from politics and the old boys' network, and just possibly "changing the rules" [as the very unhappy lecturer explained].

## Upward Mobility

Promotions at UWI are awarded according to publications, teaching ability, research, and public service or community work. Expressed differently, upward mobility and the rate thereof are based on the efforts of the individual. Research and publications are said to carry more weight than the other criteria. It was pointed out that a man and a woman entering at the same level and meeting the stated criteria at the same rate, will grow at the same particular rate of progress, suggesting therefore an absence of sex discrimination. If one meets the criteria working within the given guidelines, the progress or advancement is guaranteed. One man states:

"Generally, more and more firms find it easier to choose women in spite of the fact that they know that they are going to lose them briefly through maternity leave ... but basically the steadiness of the work and the commitment of the female to the particular firm usually would be higher, and that is increasingly being valued even by male top executives ... and I think in many situations the feeling is you can underpay women but you know you're getting quality work and experience. So in a sense a lot of upward mobility in the job or in service promotion, training and promotion are avenues through which men have been shut out because they don't want to start at certain levels, whereas, women are prepared to accept even a pay and a status lower than that, almost knowing that when they prove themselves and opportunities come, they will move up. Men want to get there right away, otherwise it's an offence to his sense of dignity."

**Table 8**  
**Structure of Teaching System, by Status**  
**by faculty, by sex, 1991/92**  
**Cave Hill Campus, UWI**

Status	Education		Arts		Soc. Science		Nat. Science		Medicine		Law	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Professor	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	2	0
Reader	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senior Lecturer	3	2	8	1	9	2	10	1	2	3	5	1
Lecturer	3	0	6	5	8	3	11	3	4	6	5	2
Assoc. Lecturer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	6	0	0
Asst. Lecturer	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
P/T. Lecturer	9	15	5	4	28	10	13	6	0	0	10	11
Totals	16	17	20	10	47	16	37	10	37	15	22	14

Source: Statistics obtained from the Handbook, Cave Hill Campus, 1991/92.



At Cave Hill, as well as at the other two major campuses, Mona, Jamaica, and St. Augustine, Trinidad, the system is patterned on the British model and one can commence their academic career by teaching at the entry level of assistant lecturer. The remaining four levels in ascending order as indicated in Table 8, are lecturer, senior lecturer, reader, and professor, one per department, usually. There are not many persons who reach the level of professor and Table 8 shows that across the six faculties, there are only seven professors, all male, while there are two faculties without a full professor, where the highest positions reached are reader and senior lecturer. At this campus, senior lecturer is the highest level most often attained.

Due to the fact that there is a large number of professional persons who teach a course(s) on a part-time basis, the analysis of the structure of the teaching system at Cave Hill will not include part-time lecturers statistically. Most of the faculty is bottle-necked at lecturer and associate lecturer with 90.4% occupying the two positions of which women account for 28.2%. When these statistics are further broken down, it is seen that women make up 21.3% of the senior lecturer positions, [the highest attained by women] and 33.9% of the lecturer positions. Some men attribute this differential to individual ambition.

In the administrative track, most positions are rotated on a two to five-year basis. The most common observation is that this track can be time-consuming and it often takes one away from research and publications for long periods of time. Consequently, the

administrative positions seem to have a negative impact on one's research and publication opportunities in the short term. Methods of promotion and the availability of opportunities generated varied responses from women and men, some of whom contend that these two tracks militate against the practice of sex discrimination:

"You do your work and chances are that you will get promoted based on your work. It's not like two people are fighting for one job. So in that sense, we are not in competition. There is not that pressure to publish. My publishing won't affect yours. Here our career grade is senior lecturer. Not many people like professor. A department might have only one professor. There are about six to eight here in the whole campus."

Equality of opportunity therefore, does exist according to this man, and success in terms of upward mobility is controlled to a large degree, by the individual whether male or female and the ambitions of those involved. Another male who is highly placed in his department, gives a similar explanation in detailing the selection committee's work.

He contends that:

"The promotions and selection processes are not gender-biased. In fact, many of these committees try to get a gender balance on all the important committees. And I am a member for example, of this faculty's selection and promotions committee and there are women on it. And in my own experience, if there is a gender bias, I would say at this moment in time, it is highly in favour of women. That a female applicant to this university in this faculty at this stage, I would say is likely to be given the nod if she's on par with a male applicant. I think that if the two are equal, I think the female would probably get the nod, because there is a notion in the faculty and in the university, *that you need to have more women on faculty.*"

"The promotion and selection processes are not gender-biased" implies that men and women academics are treated equally. And giving the qualified woman the nod, would seem to address the issue of the under-representation of women on faculty. The selection and promotions committee is willing to give the advantage to the woman, if she is on par with a male applicant. Can this be construed as reversed discrimination? Not necessarily, because they are equally qualified. But perhaps it can be defined as affirmative action.

But one woman denies this assertion of egalitarianism:

"The chaps get on better as far as promotions are concerned. This particular faculty is definitely ruled by men and that is that. I certainly don't think they have the same opportunities for promotion. I certainly think that the whole set-up here and the administration, they will consider giving somebody ... asking them to apply for promotion or something like that before our women who probably teach and publish as well. In fact, there are people here who years ago, have been given promotion and that is not right. They have no better qualifications or better publishing records than women. But in the university for instance, a woman has to be around for 14 years before she can move from lecturer to senior lecturer. While *the men don't have to. Sometimes, they are invited to apply for promotion or they are promoted.* There are cases here. The old boys' network is still working to some extent."

*"The chaps get on better as far as promotions are concerned..."* These are two polarized views of the same issue and perhaps the polarization relates to where these two individuals are in the hierarchy, representing the two groups, men and women. Men seem to perceive the situation of women in the system with a much clouded vision when compared with women's perception of their own situation. Where the man states that "a female applicant ... in this faculty is likely to be given the nod, if she's on par with a male applicant, a woman's perception of a female applying for promotion states that "I

certainly don't think they have the same opportunities for promotion". In fact, she explains that it takes a woman 14 years to move from lecturer to senior lecturer while it takes men less time. She even states that men "are invited to apply for promotion or they are promoted", and she attributes this to the fundamentals of the old boys' network.

**Table 2**  
**Campus Administration Structure,**  
**By Status, by Sex, 1990/91**  
**Cave Hill Campus**

Status	Males	Females	Total
PVC and Principal	1	-	1
PVC (Academic) & Dep.Prin.	1	-	1
Campus Registrar	-	1	1
Senior Assistant Registrar	1	1	2
Assistant Registrar	2	-	2
Works Superintendent	1	-	1
Campus Bursar	1	-	1
Senior Accountant	1	-	1
Accountant	1	-	-
Totals	9	2	11

Source: Adapted from statistics in Social Sciences Handbook, 1990/1991.

The claim of the absence of sex discrimination made by male faculty should easily be substantiated by female faculty and by campus statistics. But this is not the case. We have already analyzed the academic positions vis-a-vis women and men. Administratively, the system seems no more favourable to women. Table 9 shows eleven (11) positions commencing with accountant and at the other extreme, the pro vice-chancellor (PVC). Of these 11 positions, nine are held by males and two by females, both of whom are campus registrars, one at the assistant level. To contend that there is no sex-discrimination at the university is to ignore the under-representation of women and the disproportionate ratio of female students to male students. In the 1992/93 academic year, females made up as much as 60.7% of academic enrolment compared to 39.3% males. Yet academic and administrative positions are dominated by males.

The two views provided by this man and this woman are contradictory and they are perhaps accurate based on the position from which they have been advanced. Nevertheless, the contradiction indicates that men have a very different understanding of the experiences of women in the university, which the man indirectly acknowledges along with the need to have a better representation of women because the feeling in the university is "that you need to have more women on faculty".

Another woman on faculty contends that the system favours men and links this disadvantage for women to the existence of a traditional male structure:

"I think the barriers are very much there and will continue to be there. Oh yes, I have no illusions about that. In fact, when people say in the next generation all the races will be one, wait for the next generation, and the

next generation. And I've been around for a lot and the problems seem to be the same. I don't believe they will go away just like that. I feel that more women will become more qualified. That as we have more qualified women, women who move out of the kitchen and into the classroom, that it's bound to happen, that it's bound to give. I feel that the shift will have to take place. And it may not come easily, but it will come."

She also speaks about the shift women have made in moving out of their traditional role and into the world of work:

"At first we were in the kitchen under the thumb of the men, and now we're out of the kitchen into the classroom and into the career world. I think eventually the pendulum will swing back to the middle where some kind of adaptation or compromise will be made as far as family life and career."

Another woman gives her perspective:

"It is clear that women are moving up, but to me it's not consistent throughout in that I still find that in many cases women have it harder in going up the ladder. And I see it right here at this university. I find for instance there was a woman in charge in another area and they did their best to get her out of it. I don't think particularly it's because she's a lady. They say it's because of her attitude, but were she a man, they won't do that. I feel if she were a man, that kind of pressure would not have been on her."

And in terms of opportunities for women faculty, she felt there was still some ambivalence:

"There are three female deans in the university but I still notice that although there are three, there are not a lot of women moving up the hierarchy, normally. It's an odd thing still, even though I don't feel odd. When I sit in the group they relate to me quite naturally ... maybe it's me. Maybe they feel I'm more like they. This may sound odd but I don't think I can do whatever a man can do, and I don't try to."

In her administrative role she thinks she functions very effectively:

"I can challenge the best of them in meetings. I can take them on and I have learnt the system reasonably well. You have to learn the politics of the whole thing. There is nobody at a meeting that could make me forget a cause or dismiss it because of what they have said. I can fight that. But living this way is not easy. I won't try to fool anybody that it's all nice and easy. I'm in that particular frame of mind to deal with it and it works for me but I can't tell you it will work for anybody else."

Women know that the barriers are still present and since they have been challenging the structure, and they have discovered that in addition to vertical barriers there are lateral ones as well. Where women developed a strategy to move across and then up, they are finding barriers to moving across. And given what the two previous women said, there certainly seem to be two ladders put in place for upward mobility and the one on which the women are located seem to have rungs quite different from the men's. This challenges the whole concept of upward mobility and gender equality in the profession specifically teaching at the university of the West Indies.

### **Family Life**

University teaching appears, at least superficially, to be the one profession that is relatively conducive to family life, for men as well as for women given the flexibility of hours and structured holiday periods. Much conflict in time schedules has emerged in those careers where both spouses work a 9 - 5 or 8:30-4:30 schedule and children's school day terminates between 2:30 and 3:00 p.m. Women, in particular, who work a rigid schedule, have often experienced conflict between the school hours and their work day and often have to collect the children from school and bring them back to their



workplace. In addition to this, the flexibility of time in university teaching seems to reduce the pressure and/or stress that parents experience working a traditional time schedule.

The effect of career on family life for university teachers is different from what it is in professions such as medicine and law, and even the civil service and the commercial sectors. Some faculty members often spoke of the independence and flexibility that make the profession attractive. But do women and men benefit the same way from these variables? Some women have spoken of the pressure, and keeping up with their profession and looking after the home. And the pressure seems more intense as the women advance up the career ladder. The female dean who is also quite advanced in the academic track states:

"I'm here 'till seven, eight. Registration week I'm here till all hours in the evening. And my meetings go on and on. And I travel a lot. I travel at least once a month for a few days because we have to meet in Jamaica, Trinidad, and the Bahamas. And then I have to go to various other meetings. Then I sit on a number of boards. I'm on the Export Promotion, the Insurance Corporation of Barbados Board, I was chairman of the Economic Policy Advisory Committee. So I'm on all these committees and everything is going on 'till late in the evening. So usually, I would like to go home and find a meal cooked. So when I get home, I usually have it prepared in advance, I have to cook it. And it is difficult for me to get up in the morning and prepare because I work so late at night."

To go home and find a meal cooked is her dream. But she never does because her husband doesn't do it, and even though they have a helper, the responsibility of making dinner falls on her when she comes in after a long day because her husband doesn't like the helper to do the cooking. He prefers his wife to cook when she comes home. No

matter how late that is. And she describes what her evening is like:

"After I finish cooking and everybody is o.k., and the children have gone to bed, I'm fine for bed too, but then I sit down and work. Sometimes till 2:00 or whatever. I can go quite easily on four or four and a half hours' sleep. So I sit down and work. So then it's difficult for me to get up at 4:00 o'clock and start cooking. I'm *always scrambling out of bed* in the morning trying to get the kids ready. We were married for 15 years, but we were both studying, that's why our kids are still so young, 10 and 8. *We postponed children for a little while.* Normally at this stage, I should have older children, at least in secondary school."

Making dinner, getting the kids to bed, getting them ready for school have all been defined as additional pressures of the career woman with a family, and which are still not understood by men, generally. Even employing the strategy of postponing children for a little while in order to get her career established, she is nevertheless, caught up in the bind in her attempt to remain competitive in her field. She is fatigued but must push herself to achieve in her career. She is caught in the stressful position of meeting her domestic responsibilities and keeping up with the demands of her profession and *she is tired* but must still work "sometimes 'till 2:00 in the morning. She has learned to operate on 4 - 4 1/2 hours' sleep. In other words, she is active for 19 1/2 to 20 hours a day doing two jobs. And though she acknowledges that her husband shares some of the work, she explains that "I always complain he doesn't do enough domestic responsibilities. But still in a sense, when I think of my father, for example, my father did not know how to boil water". So she considers herself lucky because her husband cleans up after dinner, helps with the children, and looks after the dogs. She takes the children to school, he picks them up. She bathes them in the morning, he does at night.

In a sense, there is some sharing. But there seems to be so much she has responsibility for both at home and at work, and she talks about "...*scrambling out of bed in the morning to get the kids ready*". She sees the difference between her father and her husband as inter-generational change in their domestic attitude but whatever her husband does in terms of domestic chores is obviously an improvement over what her father did. However, his level of involvement was the general pattern of men who operated in a very different context and time-frame where wives probably did not go out to work in an academic career. Perhaps it would have been more useful to relate her husband's contribution to their situation and not compare it to her father's .

A female lecturer who lived in Quebec, Canada for a number of years, brings yet another dimension to the impact of family life on career and explains:

"I think very deep down in me, there is that part, the stabilizing force. And so, what I have done, is through a whole amount of gyrations and changing and planning, I've tried to do both, o.k. I also have appeared to be second to my husband ... appeared. I was never really second. It was good for him. It was good for our marriage. Somebody had to look after the baby and bring up the children. And so I think *I put my career on hold* ... I've always done very well in Quebec. But to be able to get up and come to Barbados to take a position at the university these last few years of my active career, this is when I would be able to do it. I wasn't able to do this before."

*Putting her career on hold* to raise her children, like so many women in other professions has become a female strategy to cope with the double load. What is implied here is that it is very difficult for a woman to do both jobs -- raising a family and pursuing a career at the same time, particularly a career as demanding as university

teaching where, to reach the top in the profession demands active competition particularly in terms of publishing. And it is extremely difficult for women. In response to new economic demands on households, women's participation in the paid labour force has been made increasingly easy and is more acceptable, whether or not they have children. In creating these new opportunities however, the structure of the labour market and its composition have virtually been ignored. Attention to these two factors would have shown that the structure responds to the needs of those who dominated it previously -- men. Therefore, any effort to integrate women should, of necessity, call for a revision of that structure to recognize the familial role of women. But it does not. The structure has remained the same and does not respond to women's needs. It is equivalent to converting a girls' school to a coeducational school without modifying the bathroom facilities to accommodate the boys.

One woman put her career on hold to raise her children, another decided not to marry as this woman states:

"It was a conscious decision that I could not be married and study and do all those things. I did not need the bother at the time. It had to do with priorities then ... I have never been tied to the home, even with relationships I've never been tied to that because that's the way I wanted it to be. A lot of my friends are single. It's not that they are lesbians or anything like that it's because of choices. I have friends who are lawyers, psychiatrists, doctors, friends who have made it, politicians, judges, and they are single. You make a conscious decision that this is your priority and you cannot deviate at this particular time. If it's a bachelor's you want, then a bachelor's it is. I never dreamed of becoming Mrs. This or Mrs. That. I didn't want the Mrs. There are a lot of women who got their Mrs. and raised families and they are now trying to make it in the work world. I've been out there, because that is the choice I made."

This woman pursued her studies right through to her Ph.D. and has held very prominent high profile positions. She did not feel she could have accomplished this success had she not made that conscious decision not to marry and have a family. Obviously, she did not want to sacrifice her career for marriage and children, neither was she going to deal with merging the three. But this is not peculiar to her. Many professional and career women have utilized this option as she indicated because a career was very important to them, and what seems to facilitate such decisions too, is the acceptance of the common law relationship which is relatively easy to engage in at any point in one's career, particularly if the couple does not plan to have children.

One of the male administrators takes an opposing view from the traditional stereotype of the husband and domestic responsibilities. But he does admit that while he was still married, his professional growth was not seriously affected by his family life. He explains:

"I had the freedom to continue, but I think especially in my initial years I concentrated on my research and it might have contributed [to his divorce]. Not concentrating enough on my family. So I think my family life would have suffered because of my career in that sense."

*The freedom* to continue, may have been *the choice* to continue. His wife who was a professional, did not seem prepared to carry the full load at home as many women do, while he advanced in his career. Having a wife who is also a professional who apparently did not place a ceiling on her professional development, left him in a situation similar to that in which most professional married women find themselves. He states:

"It didn't seem to affect her as much. She didn't seem to have to put aside as much of her professional life or at least did not do it, as much as I might have done. I don't know if it's my cultural background, but I see family and fathering as important as mothering and whether it's babysitting or cleaning nappies and so on. But that sort of thing I grew up with. I don't feel less than a man to engage in cleaning house. I share household duties, and share parenting. But I suspect that has to do with the way I was brought up. Because I grew up with that. Especially in the West Indian society, it is not macho-like to be changing nappies and cleaning house."

The first few lines of his statement are often uttered by women except for a change in pronouns: "*She didn't ... put aside as much of her professional life as much as I might have done*". This type of man would definitely help to reduce the double load that career women carry. He certainly is the first man who indicates not only that he has had to put aside much of his professional life due to family responsibilities, but he believes that family life has affected his professional goals more than it affected his wife's -- a reversal in trend. Being contrary to the pattern that has emerged in all the other professions, this may be an unusual couple, particularly in terms of domestic roles and career advancement. In addition to this, he sees the role of fathering as important as that of mothering and he shares household duties and parenting. Of course, his early socialization may have instilled in him this unique male approach to family life as he states that "I suspect it has to do with the way I was brought up". This man talks of *sharing* parenting and household duties, and presents himself as the model partner for career women in whose laps the full responsibility usually falls.

At the other end of the spectrum another man gives a diametrically opposed perspective:

"... it's [his work] something that absorbs all of my time. And naturally, my wife and family, I suppose, they don't really complain openly, but I have no time for them. In fact, I have an illness called work. I can't imagine for instance, taking a week off and going to spend it in a hotel at a beachside and do nothing. To me, that's not recharging the battery. For me that is not work. It's simply a waste of good time that you could be using to do something."

While one man intercepted his professional growth to share responsibilities and be a good father, another confesses he has no time for his wife and family because he has a disease called work.

### **The Structure of University Teaching**

The structure of university teaching at Cave Hill Campus has two tracks: academic and administrative. The first is geared towards capacity and ability and the other represents administrative skills. Men and women appear to have equal access to the academic and administrative tracks through evaluations made by various committees and also through a process of rotation. Examination of both tracks reflects an over-representation of males, but this male dominance is waning even if only slightly, and a process of change is taking place. The academic track, five-tiered in its structure, reflects a movement up the ladder from the entry level of assistant lecturer, and in ascending order goes to lecturer, senior lecturer, reader, and professor. Of the five women interviewed, only one with two years' experience on faculty, was at the first level, or assistant lecturer. Two were lecturers and two were senior lecturers. Among the men, there were two lecturers, seven senior lecturers and one professor. Administratively, the

women were also making progress. There was a female faculty dean and a female department head. The administrative positions are largely rotational even though there are still very few women in these positions.

A woman gives a clear perspective on the situation and states:

"I think we are talking about power, and I'm not at all sure that this is something that will happen very quickly. I think it will come. Women will have to fight for it. I don't think it will be given up. It won't be offered. Recently, a lecturer at Mona Campus became a pro vice-chancellor, a PVC, which is a very top position, and she's the first one in the whole of the university of the West Indies [opened in 1949]. So a woman is at the very top level. I would think all the PVCs are men. The chancellor, the vice-chancellor, the principals, are all men, of all the campuses are all men."

*"I think we are talking about power ... women will have to fight for it."* This woman indicated the male hierarchy is still intact whether or not one or two women have been brought into the fold. And the power remains firmly in the hands of the males. Some males think it is automatic that women will rise to the very senior positions by virtue of the number qualifying and the fact that the university is concerned about the concept of gender equality. But so far, according to these women, it projects a structure whereby men have equality, as this woman has indicated "all the PVCs are men, the chancellor, the vice-chancellor, the principals, are all men", at every campus. Of the 16-member administrative structure at Cave Hill, only three (or 18.7%) are women, whereas 81.3% are men, and the majority of these positions in this structure are considered senior administrative (Cartey, 1988), giving men dominance both in the academic and administrative tracks. When we examine the support staff for the faculties of Social



Sciences, Arts and General Studies, and Law, presented in Table 9, it is seen that of a total of 11 employees, there are no males in any of these lower rung positions, projecting a skewed polarization of staff where at one extreme men occupy the senior top positions, and at the other extreme, women occupy the positions at the base of the structure. What then is the differential that persistently excludes women from the upper levels? Men have stated there is no sex discrimination, but as one woman above states, when we talk about these positions "we are talking about power", and men have always held all the power.

A female senior lecturer provides her perspective in terms of men and women in the hierarchy stating:

"Women don't chair any faculty committees. I don't know of any women chairs. Well I don't know about the university committees. *The deputy dean is always a boy.* You know after years and years, the thing is, there is a certain hierarchy of people. One is Jamaican, one a Dominican, but all are men."

This boy/girl syndrome which has surfaced in this study does have some importance. Generally, when women in the office are referred to by males as girls or ladies, it is often because of a situational difference which indicates that women are in subordinate positions and conversely, when women refer to men as boys it is also a situation which seems to indicate sex discrimination as the men (boys) are frequently younger, even if as qualified as the women. And it is articulated as resentment.

The female dean gives her views:

"I am the third oldest in the department. Not only the third oldest, but the longest serving member. And I was also the first member to have a Ph.D. When I got my Ph.D. and came back in, I was the only person with it. I

was also the first person in the department to write a book. I have three major books published and two smaller ones. So I think the members respected me from that point of view, professionally. And we got along very well. I only had trouble from one member of the staff, a male. And I don't think it was so much that I was female. It was because I was head, and I was also more qualified. And they had done it to someone else before me, and someone else, and someone else. *It wasn't easy*. I had been a student here and some of these people had taught me. But I don't think the attacks were due to my gender, I think it was due to my position. The fact that I was now head and the person felt a bit threatened."

*"I was now head and the person felt a bit threatened"*. This perception of threat is not confined to the professions studied. It is a new phenomenon which is pervasive in the wider society where women, as a group, have articulated this experience and link it to their increasing participation in society: in the school, university, the labour force, the home, for example, where women have been redefining their role. They are often perceived by men as a threat particularly when they are more qualified and have reached a senior position in any profession. This woman does give a clear example of a woman moving up the ladder to senior lecturer on the one hand, and faculty dean on the other and she sees the attacks on her not in terms of gender but as a reaction to authority. She seems suitably qualified for the position she holds and is the longest serving in the department [15 years]. She is the first in the department with a Ph.D., the first to write a book and now has five published; all of which indicate she merits her promotions and appointments. Women who do get promoted seem well qualified for their promotion. This woman appears to function confidently, and talks about her faculty board meetings:

"I remember in the past those meetings used to be something else with so

much arguing and fighting going on. I noticed that since I became head, some of the fighters actually stay away. I take a strong hand in my meetings. If they don't behave I ask them to leave."

She seems to have brought some stability and decorum to the faculty board meetings and is intolerant of misconduct. She is perhaps seen as a threat not only because of her qualifications and position but also for her confident leadership style.

A man gives a brief analysis of the changes he sees necessary in terms of the composition of the structure:

"It's already on record that there are more women graduating, and even if the system stifles promotion and that type of thing, again, it's only a matter of time before the old guard has to go and the women will be the ones taking over."

When the old guard goes women will probably replace them, given current trends. A few women are already well positioned in the system even though in small numbers and there is a vast majority being prepared in all disciplines which seems to guarantee their successful emergence at the top, when the old guard goes. This reflects the same sentiments of one of the female lawyers who predicted that since larger numbers of women than men are graduating in law annually, eventually the prominent, older lawyers will go, leaving a vacuum at the top which women will likely fill. There is an influx of women pursuing studies at every level in most disciplines and they are taking up positions once held exclusively by men both inside and outside the university.

Gender is only one of the criteria of discrimination. A senior male faculty member speaks about the process of promotions and the criteria used. He felt that

publications were critical to the process of promotions and explains:

"They are based on a person's publications. That's the main criterion. Having said that, little you know it's a three campus university. The senior promotions are carried out at the university level and a person is assessed by outside reviewers. The situation as perceived from this campus is that all those sorts of checks and balances and the rest of it, are not carried out in a fair way in relation to this campus. So in fact, there hasn't been any senior promotions since this faculty began even though there are people here who are definitely on par or better than colleagues on the other two campuses."

"They are based on a person's publications. That's the main criterion". The fact that people at Cave Hill Campus who are as qualified or better qualified than colleagues on the other two campuses, and have not been receiving promotions, points to structural discrimination rather than sex discrimination in his view, even though on another dimension, sex discrimination may enter the equation. Such campus biases, one may contend, may create two challenges for women. In the first instance, women need to help generate campus parity, and in the second they must demand gender equality within their own campus, which at present does not seem to exist. And when the speaker suggests that people at Cave Hill are not receiving promotions, is he talking about men and women or only men? For, according to the women, this is not a new experience for them. It is the argument that women have been articulating for years at all levels of the labour market. For women there has always been a gender inequality component.

## **Gender Defined Jobs**

Given the composition of university teaching staff at Cave Hill Campus, one may conclude that both the research and administrative tracks have been defined for men. One may therefore want to query, how have women been able to take up prominent, and in some cases, 'powerful' positions in both tracks recently? Women hold positions such as dean, and department head. They have also reached the level of senior lecturer. But does the inclusion of women change the male image of these positions or do women seem odd in them? Considering that women in these administrative positions identified above, are still perceived as the "ground-breakers", these jobs cannot be identified as gender neutral. But even in considering that women are acquiring better opportunities, they still have a long way to go to gain equality with males. Men and women should also be filling positions at the lower levels. If these positions continue to be filled only by women, or if women continue to be held back for these positions, then it will present a distorted picture in terms of gender and inequality will persist.

Women are still the minority in senior administrative positions and in academic positions. The position of men and women in the system reflect the image of an hour glass. At the base there are many women in low paying, routine, and dead end jobs. As the glass narrows to its mid-section, there are fewer women reaching the upper echelons. Again at the base of the glass, there are very few men at its mid-section but the number increases as the glass (or the system) widens at its uppermost levels to present a distinct polarized structure based on sex.

The Institute of Social and economic Research is primarily dominated by women. With the exception of the senior research fellow, the other positions are held by women including that of director. Among the support staff, there is one male office assistant.

The foregoing gives an example of what the structure of university teaching at Cave Hill Campus, UWI, is like. Having stated that women form the minority in senior administrative and academic positions, this should at least be followed by the statement that in both faculty and administrative tracks, women are outnumbered by men and it would seem that this under-representation is no more than what is reflected at the upper levels. And the fact that a woman has made it to the position of dean, and another as department head, speaks well of their determination to break down and overcome the institutionalized barriers.

## **Conclusion**

University teaching in Barbados has become a prestigious and popular profession for women and men since the establishment of the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies. Like most other professions, university teaching at Cave Hill is dominated by men. Women remain a minority in high profile areas of the profession (and within each faculty they are also in a minority position particularly at the higher levels), boards and committees are also dominated by men with the token female presence. What is noticeable in analyzing the composition of these boards and committees is that there is only one female among a large number of males. And although there is at least one

female included, it is generally the same name recurring on each committee. This may imply reduced female participation as the female input at these various meetings is always coming from the same source.

Women's participation at the upper levels of administration and teaching does not reflect the large number of women to whom the university caters, which in 1992/93 academic year was 60.7% as opposed to 39.3% males. In addition to this, the support services of the university are provided in most cases by a full contingent of females. So that women on two levels provide the opportunity for men to advance in their careers and in their high profile positions. Women, as educational clients create the need for academic staff, and on the second level, they provide the support services to keep the institution functioning well. Men therefore, become the real beneficiaries of the institution. Women are also overlooked both by government in such situations and they feel discriminated against within the institution itself, citing as an example, the number of years it takes a woman to move up one rung of the academic ladder, compared to the time it takes a man. Men have a different perception of the situation of women and their experience, which leads them to contend that there is no sex discrimination at the campus. But statistics of the gender composition and the exclusion of women from key positions emphasize an acute imbalance of men and women that favours men in every case.

The provisions made by government to promote gender equality through free university education, is the basis from which many women have addressed their own

personal development. But the concept of gender equality is then compromised as women are not given equal recognition with men. This is observed in government's appointments to academic boards and committees at the three campuses. At Cave Hill where they make their majority of appointments, women were totally excluded from the list of appointees. The one appointment made to the committee at Mona Campus in Jamaica, another male was appointed, while the position seems to rotate between a man and a woman for the Ste. Augustine Campus in Trinidad. By excluding women from these positions and opportunities, it intercepts social and economic development as at least half of the country's population is being overlooked in terms of participation and contribution.

Despite the opportunities generated by the flexibility of academia and the structure of schedules, women and men are affected differently specifically if the women are also raising a family. Attending conferences, meetings, publishing, and community involvement are factors weighted for promotion and women have stated that they often intercept their family responsibilities but they do not affect the men's. Women have attempted to cope in three different ways. One woman put her career on hold, one woman decided not to marry and have children, while another postponed children for a number of years while she focused on her career. These women are representative of women in other professions who employ the same kind of strategies to function within a male, competitive system.

Women in university teaching at Cave Hill Campus have nevertheless, been making some progress. There are already one female dean, one female department head,



and a female director of the research institute. Generally, women are satisfied with their work and are committed to doing an excellent job. They are aware of the barriers that they must overcome and they find it even more challenging as there are not many women strategically placed to facilitate the process. Two women in particular spoke of job dissatisfaction, one relating it to sex discrimination which she has experienced and observed, while the other woman spoke of changing rules which intercepted her appointment and status at the campus. Women who were satisfied identified different sources of satisfaction in different ways from men. Job satisfaction in university teaching at Cave Hill is measured differently based on gender.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **The Medical Profession**

The role of women in the medical profession in Barbados has for a long time, been restricted to nursing. Consequently, the structure of the profession specifically as it relates to doctors, has been a direct response to the needs of men. Work schedules, years for career growth, continuing studies in medicine, policy and decision-making, all considered for generations, the needs of men. More recently however, since women have been making inroads in the profession, there seems to be constant struggle and conflict for women to fit into a mould created for, and shaped by the male. To offset this struggle and conflict, women have been devising strategies to create a sub-system within the existing one where they can remain in the profession under their own conditions. They have, for the most part, retained their interest and commitment to family life making modifications that allow for a medical career. To execute these two jobs, they have set their own limits by creating a ceiling for their professional growth. Where men seem to stretch themselves to the limit to achieve the ultimate in their career, women find happiness in achieving a little less, and raising their family at the same time. Some women have devised other strategies which call for postponing family life in order to advance professionally, while others have decided against having a family altogether. In any case, it's a price that men do not have to pay because of their biological differences and their domestic role within the family.

Increasingly, women are overcoming the barriers to various professions, and specifically in relation to science, women are challenging the stereotype that girls do not go into science. Of the ten female college graduates who were awarded the Barbados Scholarship in 1991, eight of them went on to pursue degrees in science. But although the 10 males have all gone on to pursue the sciences, the new academic interests of women suggest that male dominance in the sciences is being seriously challenged.

In keeping with tradition, more men than women among recent graduates go into private practice. While two of the female doctors were in private practice, eight worked in the public service, distributed among the ministry of health (1) The Queen Elizabeth Hospital (5, one of whom was an intern), and the psychiatric hospital (2). On the other hand, six of the males were in private practice, while four were attached to the general hospital (three of these were interns, one at post-graduate level). Why are there such broad discrepancies in private practice and staff positions for men and women in medicine? The women indicated that their choice of a staff position over private practice related more to their family responsibilities than to career development as did their level of accomplishment and their choice of specialization.

Women interact with the profession differently from men. Where men seem to settle in a discipline without any real problems, women move around from discipline to discipline, to assess the effectiveness of each and the satisfaction they offer, turning down disciplines for a variety of reasons. Women receive differential treatment and there is some evidence of male hostility towards female doctors. There is also differential interaction with patients based on sex: women talk about their ambivalence towards the

profession in its inability to provide effective treatment and they question the role medicine really plays for the patient. Meeting and chatting with relatives of amputees became extremely stressful for some and for others, heart disease, strokes, senility, and episiotomies were equally stressful. This arouses the emotions of the female doctor in a way that it does not seem to arouse the male. It is this gender difference in experience that the chapter explores as it investigates the emerging trends.

The sample is a diverse group drawn from the general hospital, the psychiatric hospital, private practice, and a few at the internship level. The doctors range in age from the mid-twenties to the mid-sixties, and come from across a 14-range spectrum of disciplines. The majority (6) of the men were in private practice as opposed to the women, most (8) of whom were on staff at the two major medical institutions, i.e., the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and Barbados Psychiatric Hospital. Seven of the males were married, two were single and one was divorced, whereas four of the women were married, three were divorced, two were single, one lived with her partner.

## The Feminization of the Medical Profession

**Table 10**

**Number of Registered Medical Practitioners**

**In Barbados, 1992**

Men	Women	Total
186	64	250

Source: Statistics obtained from the Ministry of Health, Barbados, 1992.

The practice of health medicine in Barbados has undergone important change consistent with social and economic change in the country, projecting important implications for the gender composition of the profession. Increasingly, more women are entering the profession, which gives rise to certain significant questions: how are women being integrated in this male enclave which for generations had been perceived to be a male profession? Where are women situated in the profession and are they perceived as being intrusive in this male domain? There are, proportionately, far more men than women who go into private practice. Why is this? What factors influence the decision-making process?

**Table 11**  
**Distribution of Doctors Employed by the Government**  
**of Barbados at Medical Institutions,**  
**by Institution, by sex, 1992**

Institution	% Male	% Female	Number
Queen E. Hosp.	57.9	22.2	137
Psyc. Hospital	02.9	01.2	07
Geriatric Hosp	01.2	-	02
Polyclinics	09.9	04.7	25
Totals	71.9	28.1	171

Source: 1993 Official documents obtained from the Ministry  
of Health, Barbados.

This distribution of medical practitioners within the public service indicates that the QEH and the now popular polyclinics are the major institutions where the majority of men and women are located, with men dominating both institutions numerically.

Women's increasing participation in the profession is due in part, to their better performance at school and access to new opportunities. The female intern spoke of the rising disequilibrium emerging in the class room in med school and its implications:

"... there are quite a lot of women in medicine today, and there's no doubt about it. My class was 50-50 men and women and the class before me was 60-40 women to men. I mean there are just more and more women! You know people have been saying, jokingly of course, that they are going to have to start a quota system because girls are just doing so well premedically, that they qualify more women. If you just take the numbers getting 'A's', they will have all girls. They will have to find a way of sifting out some of the boys."

**Table 12**  
**The Queen Elizabeth Hospital**  
**Annual Recruitment Levels**  
**of Doctors, by year, by sex, 1987 - 1991**

Year	Male	Female	Total
1987	12	07	19
1988	11	15	26
1989	12	06	18
1990	16	07	23
1991	11	13	24
Totals	62	48	110

Source: Statistics obtained from the Ministry of Health, 1992.

The above table shows that in 1987 of the 19 doctors that were recruited by the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, 36.8% (or 7) were female. In 1988 and 1991 female recruitment levels doubled the previous years at 57.7% and 54.2% of total recruitment, respectively. In the remaining years, recruitment levels were stable at about 50% of total recruitment. While recruitment of women between 1987 and 1991 fluctuated, the levels for men remained relatively constant except for 1990 when it increased by approximately 25% over the previous years. During this five-year period, (1987-1991), the proportion of females recruited by the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was 43.6% of total recruitment. This represents a remarkable change in the image of a profession that once reflected a male domain. If present trends continue with more women than men entering medical school, it is anticipated that female recruitment levels will surpass the male at government institutions.

One extremely vocal woman who is often described by her male colleagues as the "Iron Lady", particularly for her various roles in the association of medical practitioners (i.e., president, vice-president, general secretary, and council member), and in the union, contends that:

"The women coming into the medical profession are very bright. In almost any profession, if one has to look at the average women in the professions and the average men, the woman is always brighter than the man."

Women may or may not always be brighter, but they do have problems being accepted. Continuing to describe the integration of women in the profession she states: "for women in the profession it's almost a love/hate relationship. Sometimes grudgingly, women are seen as the outsider by older doctors - approximately the 55-year age group. The change in the profession and women's role may be a source of conflict because the younger doctors are sometimes reluctant to accept women in the profession. They still tend to regard women first on gender and then as professionals".

Some of the senior male doctors who have been in the profession for over 40 years spoke of the transformation that they have observed. One notes:

"On my return to Barbados, there were no women in the profession, but with current trends, women will come to dominate the profession because there is tertiary education available for all bright students who are academically conscious. Men are becoming sluggish, and don't have the drive to do things. Women, generally, are doing better. They have penetrated the entire society."

Speaking of the type of person entering the medical profession today, he states: "The profession sees a much brighter person going into medicine. It is now dealing with the cream of the crop. The tendency now is to be more academic. There is more statistical



analysis and post-graduate work has become more popular among young doctors". This senior doctor felt that younger males are not as receptive to the presence of women and that the inherent hostility may eventually lead to confrontation:

"Inherent hostility toward women is still very present and the barriers create a natural rebellion. If techniques and skills are not handled adequately, it could lead to confrontation."

While some male doctors expect conflict and struggle, others are more optimistic. This does not imply however, that women doctors are well received and that the glass ceiling has disappeared. But change is taking place.

The dentist, who described himself as a single parent of two young children, spoke about the male chauvinistic tendencies that men still harbour, and women's struggle in modern day society, even in the professions:

"Don't forget it wasn't long ago that it was felt that women should be kept perpetually pregnant and barefoot, you know. And the mentality is still there, especially among men ... that's what women are for. I look at it in the same way that blacks have to struggle in order to ... you've got to be twice as good in order to make it out there. *Women are going to have to be twice as good in order to make it in the same areas that men are making it easily*, but it will come, you can't stop it. And even though it's a black male that they have to compete with, they are going to have to prove to the male that they are just as good or better, and many times, they are going to have to *show that they are twice as good to be able to make the same decisions*... but it will come."

A male perspective of women's struggle in the professions and ultimately, society, this man substantiates what women and feminists have been arguing for sometime now ... that women must be twice as good as the man to make the same decisions or reap the same rewards.

A male intern, speaking of his assignment in the casualty exudes disguised

hostility toward a female colleague in particular, and indeed toward women in general:

"There was one when I first came, she was married and just had a kid. I have noticed that she's working all days, alright? Yes, she probably wants her time with her baby in the evenings and all that, so she was coming in every morning and that really shouldn't be the case because if you're a doctor, and you're working in the casualty, you're expected to work any hour. There shouldn't be any specific hours *just because you have a child.*"

*"There shouldn't be any specific hours just because you have a child"*. But this is the precise experience and indeed attitude of men, that women have talked about. Men are seldom inconvenienced by the arrival of a child, or have to change their domestic or career schedules in any significant way. And therefore they do not seem to understand the intricacies of childrearing. In other words, this intern is saying don't expect any special favours *"just because you have a child."* Obviously, this man trivializes the reproductive role of women because mothers are the ones whose lives really do change.

The intern continues to state his position:

"I believe she should have waited until she finished her internship. When I really heard that she was married, she'd just started her internship. She shouldn't have had her pregnancy until after she had completed her internship, and then go into general practice where she'd be likely working normal hours a lot."

Women doctors with families who are forced into general practice and such areas because of the "normal hours", will perhaps be ultimately creating a dichotomy in the profession where they may even see themselves marginalized. This man points in many ways to the various problems women in the profession have been articulating in terms of their dual role as professional and the perpetual home-maker. He goes as far as to express his arrogance towards women because of their reproductive role. Not only does

he suggest when the intern should start her family, but he also specifies the area of work in which she should settle herself so as not to disturb the rigid work schedule which the profession has so carefully designed for men, generations ago, when the idea of a female doctor in Barbados was still unheard of. This helps to explain why the profession had always been perceived to be a male domain with women at the other end of the spectrum as patients, perhaps. It seems that this male attitude serves to emphasize the need to have women at the decision-making level where they can have some input into the operations of these institutions and the design of schedules with which they must work in order to reflect a better understanding of the needs of the female doctor.

Not all male doctors display a hostile attitude towards their female colleagues as this male consultant indicates: "I think what is happening now is that you are going to find women are going to dominate the profession in the next few years. It is happening very rapidly. I would think that in ten years' time, there will be a complete transformation." Men generally seem to think that women are now performing better in school and will ultimately be successful in the profession thereby dominating it. And he gives examples of these changes: "women are doing a lot better at school. They get scholarships. They have done better at university, they have done better in job situations. And I think that in a matter of about ten years, there will be a major transformation in Barbadian society..." Women have always been doing well in school in Barbados. What has changed is that the opportunity for rewards has been extended to them.

How do women respond to this ambivalent attitude of men in the profession? The female private practitioner speaks about the dilemma a woman with a family experiences

when there are young children involved:

"One of the times that I can see some degree of ... I won't call it resentment, but a different attitude seen is when the woman has a family. As long as she's single or she's married without children and she doesn't have those sorts of responsibilities, then I don't think that there is much a woman can't do. But when a woman has children now to look after as a major responsibility from time to time, as a result her responsibilities in the profession may have to come second. Like in the event where she can't turn up for work because she has a sick child to look after. It is perceived as a source of irritation by members of the department or she's interrupting the smooth flow of things."

The anaesthetist gave her perspective of such hostility and uses her own experience as an example:

"The society as a whole has to accept the family as a very important and integral part of society. I think we are recognizing it intellectually and paying a lot of lip service generally in the society. I think one of the major things that need to be done in tackling the problem, is to accept that it's not just the woman who is responsible for the family. If the woman is the head of a single parent unit, then she may be the only one responsible and should be accorded a status as a result, rather than relegating her role as sort of it's an inconvenience to even have a family; you know: 'I'm very sorry that Johnny has a fever today, but I expect you at work. Don't bring me your troubles'. I heard a number of heads of departments, and in fact I've even been told by the head of my department 'well really and truly, I'm not interested in your problems'."

Do men, or more specifically male bosses, give consideration to the fact that they seldom have such an experience, staying home on account of a sick child, or altering their work schedule? It is simply because they have passed the full responsibility over to a woman. If their wives work, they too, will at some point have the same experience as the subordinates of these bosses. The anaesthetist calls for re-educating society to recognize the importance of recreation for, and spending time with the family. This she believes, will help to maximize employees' contribution to society:

"I think that the professions and employers that recognize this and go out of their way to make room for that for their employees, whether they be doctors or not, will get a lot of productivity out of their staff and that goes for all of society. If you can overcome that [the traditional way of doing things], then you would have done a lot to the benefit, not only for the productivity in your workplace, but the whole society and that a lot of the problems we now see would become problems of the past ... it's not that difficult."

Generally speaking, the image of the medical profession has changed now that women make up about 25% of the profession. It is now generally understood and perhaps accepted, that anyone turning up at the general hospital for an examination may very well be attended by a male or female doctor. In previous years, the doctor was a man and often, a white man. These are two important changes which the profession has undergone and it has become quite difficult for the older generation, those in the over 70 years age group. At times, the female doctor still comes up against the elderly (often lady) whose perception of the doctor has not changed, as this doctor explains:

"... if I have seen any major differences in the way I'm treated or I should say called, not treated, it's by patients because their immediate assumption is that I'm a nurse and they get very flustered. Even though I've introduced myself as doctor, they call me nurse. It does not bother me because I know it is not disrespectful. But they feel very badly and then it's ... 'oh, I'm sorry doctor! But they still have this perception that doctors are men."

Obviously, these women were unaware of the changes that have been taking place around them for the past 20 or so years and were obviously out of touch with the medical profession. Another female doctor spoke about her encounters with some of her surprised patients. Although she had introduced herself as doctor, her patient insisted on calling her nurse. But when she did realize that this woman was indeed the doctor, she exclaimed: "You are a doctor? poor thing, you haven't even lost your mother's features

yet!" The doctor found this funny as the woman was indicating that she still looked very young and unlike the older male doctors who in previous times may have worked for a year or two before travelling abroad to study therefore returning as a much older person than the young doctors one sees today. The pediatrics consultant speaks also of similar experiences even occurring in her private office:

"It's not only just the men, but the women also, they take a second look ...' you're a doctor in truth?' I find the older women, sometimes do not expect female doctors. Not just myself but most of the female doctors, they call them nurse. But not so much the 50-year old and under. They would recognize it, but the older ones 70s and so, still tend to think of the doctor as a man."

This is not because the women are generally petite and young. It is an historical perception that is being expressed. For these older women, it may seem as though women are simply crossing the threshold that distinguished between doctor and nurse. Another elderly lady who brought her granddaughter to the pediatrician's, on entering the office announced to the doctor that she was there to see the doctor, at which time the doctor responded "but I'm the doctor". The lady, who apparently, was a bit confused, said to her: "but you're supposed to be a man, and white!"

### **CAREER CHOICE**

Many factors influence the choice of a medical career. For the men however, an interesting pattern emerged. Most (8) made the decision for a medical profession themselves, and the other two were largely influenced by their fathers. In both cases, these men felt that economic conditions militated against their fathers' own ambitions, consequently leading them to realize their goals through their sons. For women, a wider

range of factors were important: four made the choice independently, three were influenced by their fathers, two by their mothers, and one by her brother. The brother's encouragement was subtle but meaningful, given the traditional stereotypes rigidly in place at the time. In articulating her pre-adolescent perception of women in society, this woman, now a consultant in psychiatry explains:

"I really thought we could only do three things. At my stage, when I was thinking about what to do, when I was about 10, 11, I thought there were only three jobs available - hairdressing, nursing, and teaching. Hairdressing because I heard about that and that women do it. Teaching because all my aunts and my mother had been teachers, and nursing because a cousin or two had done nursing, and I thought those were the things girls did. So it was ingrained like that. And I wanted to be a nurse because I knew I couldn't do no hairdressing. I knew I wasn't dexterous with my hands, and I didn't want to be in teaching because my interaction with my aunts had been ... they were always down on me. And I wanted to help people and my brother said 'well you could be a nurse. That's alright, and take orders or you could be a doctor, and give them'. So, the light went on in my head and I decided I wanted to be a doctor. And my father thought it was great that I wanted to be a doctor."

One of the women who made the choice independently could not remember at what age she knew she wanted to become a doctor but felt that she always had that desire. She stated that had parents made that decision for her she would have rebelled:

"I always wanted to be a doctor. I never wanted to be anything else. I had unique parents when it comes to that because in actual fact, had they been different parents my career would have been different in that I don't think I have curtailed my potential academically."

Another young woman who was largely influenced by her mother, was the first in her family to enter one of the major professions, and used this as a motivating factor:

"Well, the more I think about it, the more I realize that my parents were a big influence. Not because my parents were in a particular profession, but because they were not very educated. Neither of them finished secondary school. My mother did night classes and managed to get a few

'O' levels, but essentially, I can't think of any university graduates, up to my great grand parents level. There were no university graduates that I know of, so there was a big thing that somebody go to university and the opportunity was there for me and I had the support ... especially from my mother."

Nevertheless, she really made up her mind only eight months before she actually applied to med school:

"...it was not 'till eight months before I applied. It was a gun shot type of thing because my mother is a nurse, and I was always interested in nursing. She always had medical books around the house which I found interesting. And she said to me 'well if you want to be in the medical field, be a doctor, don't be a nurse'. She encouraged me because she thought **nurses are overworked and underpaid**, and she thought I had the ability to go for it."

Young mothers today have high expectations of their children and encourage them to go into professions of their interests. They discourage them from limiting themselves. This young woman however, received conflicting messages in the class room: while she received her mother's encouragement, she was vehemently discouraged by one of her teachers and her classmates. Not only was she rejected by her peers, she was also publicly humiliated by her teacher who expressed little confidence in her ability to do well, and for that matter, in his own ability, as a teacher, to transform that perceived deficiency into competence. She states:

"...it spurred me on. I remember the very second day or something like that in my class, the maths teacher came in the room and said 'oh, you're from England. Well, the education for blacks in England isn't very good, so I don't expect you to do very well'. Yes, he said that to me point blank in front of the whole class and I felt very badly. So that gave me more incentive to do well."

For some, making a career decision is not always easy, but for others it is. One man in private practice, knew from about nine years of age, he wanted to be a doctor,



but believed that many people make up their minds much later.

"Very few students between the ages of 10 and 17 plan their future...very few. I for one, had made up my mind that I was going to become a doctor ... from the time I was nine, ten years old, and I worked towards that field. That's why I then opted to come to the Modern [High School] to pursue biology, chemistry, physics and so on. Many others wait until they reach a level where they can make a choice."

But this doctor felt the idea of becoming a doctor was instilled in him by his father who did not realize his own ambition to become a doctor.

### CAREER ASPIRATIONS

Both men and women point to significant differences in career aspirations. For example, family life had little impact, if any, on the career aspirations of the men. While for women, career aspirations revolved around, and were shaped by their family life patterns and choices. Surgery for instance, was described by both men and women as excessively demanding, and though the majority of the men and women chose to avoid it as their specialization, women's decisions were based on their family life situation or their family life expectations. Contrastingly, the areas of specialization chosen by men were based purely on career interest. One young male intern expressed his views this way:

"... it's always the guys that will end up specializing because the girls, they get married as soon as they graduate but we are still single and we then have time to concentrate on post-graduate studies. But I agree that marriage does limit their potential when it comes to specializing."

Although this intern plans to get married, his long term career plan is to become a surgeon. He sees this however, as very unlikely for the female who aspires to become

a surgeon. An ambition which he argues, eludes many women who want to have a family.

The female surgeon/consultant described the situation similarly as the reason why more women do not choose to specialize in surgery. "What I think is that most women realize that surgery is very demanding on their time and it's a basic decision you have to make whether or not you want to give that kind of time to your career. Not that they don't like it, but it just takes up too much time. They have other things and other interests they may want to go on with".

But the female intern contends that there are two types of women going into the profession. One group having high aspirations to move up to the top and others not so ambitious. She describes them as follows: "We have a situation where women are on the same level, same educational level, same intelligence, similar goals. I mean not every one wants a family and you're going to have to find room for these women somewhere." But there is another type of woman in the profession like herself: "I don't want to be a professor, I don't want to be dean of the medical faculty. I don't want to be the top gun. And I don't think as many women want to be the top gun, as we think".

However, further discussions with this woman revealed that there was either differential socialization in the home or at the least differential reaction to socialization. In a family of three girls all three reacted differently to the same, presumably, socialization.

"My younger sister is a computer software engineer. she lives in England and she's doing well, so my mother is proud of the two of us. So just to give you an example, I have another sister, who doesn't know what she wants to do, just changing from job to job. And she is the outcast one,

because she's different. She didn't want to get a scholarship, she didn't want to go to school, she didn't want to do anything. She is the oldest and didn't set the example that she should have and therefore, is having all the frustrations now."

One girl emigrated and prospered, one stayed at home and drifted, and one stayed and became a doctor. We are not therefore, simply passive recipients of our parental socialization.

This young female resident, was not absolutely sure that women really welcome all the pressures that come with success, such as, becoming a consultant. She has a different approach to her career which seems to give serious consideration to a balance in life.

"I don't know, I have a feeling that not many women want that [pressure]. O.k., I want to be a human primarily. I know that is a funny statement. I want to be a well-rounded person socially, physically, spiritually, and everything, and I don't think I can do that. If I really put my mind on something and say for example, I want to be a brain surgeon, I'm going to have to shut everything else out if I'm going to do it properly. And I think for me, personally, I want a balanced life. I want to have a husband. I think I want a couple of kids. Have this terrific job! I think I want to have that. So I don't want to let the good years pass and say 'o.k. I'm going to dedicate the next 30 years of my life to study'."

The anaesthetist, was not sure if she wanted to pursue her career further; she was quite uncertain whether that was her goal: "I know who I am and what I'm capable of doing and what I can't do. And I don't have to prove anything to anybody and that, I think, is a major advantage".

Despite the evidence of both the feminization of the profession and some upward mobility within it, women doctors tend to agree that it is not easy and they constantly experience conflict and pressure brought about by their domestic responsibilities and their

struggle for career advancement as this woman points out:

"I have come under a lot of pressure from my colleagues to go and do the DM [Doctor of Medicine] in anaesthesia, which I have to actually live with. I did the DM Part I in 1985 and ever since then, I have been under so much pressure to do it [Part II] ... to 'go and do it now or you're not going to get around to doing it'... 'it's better when your children are young rather than when they are older, and the older they get the more they rely on you', and 'you're not academically fulfilled unless you've got it'." Naturally, this becomes cumulative pressure from this woman's peers which must not necessarily be viewed in negative terms only. Recognizing her capabilities her peers are no doubt encouraging her to move on to the next stage in her profession. But with two young children, she explains, it is not easy. Consequently, this encouragement evolves into pressure and emphasizes for women the conflict generated by career and family. Women often resolve this conflict by sacrificing their career. Seldom do they go on to reaching their full potential and this woman continues to explain:

"I think the problem is partly that our profession still sees people in terms of their qualifications and also people do it for other reasons. People feel that I cannot get anywhere unless I get a DM. I am not sure I necessarily want to go places that the DM will take me. If I find that I want to go that far, and I find it will be an advantage for me, then I 'd go and do it. Right now, I don't see it. It would just be a qualification."

In some cases, women experience pressure from their male colleagues to excel in their field while others are ambivalent about women in the profession. Still, some women are discouraged, often by their husbands, whose support was often described as lacking. The public health consultant initially wanted to pursue post-graduate studies but lacked the support she needed from her husband: "when the time came for me to do the

master's, he didn't want me to go away for a year. It is very demanding, but that's what happened. I don't know if I would do it again ... I mean public health. Definitely I would become a doctor, no doubt about that. It's important and I try to do my best. I think it's worthwhile. Sometimes you can't measure success. You don't have the patient who gets better, a baby who is born, somebody who is running about saying 'look you did this operation on me and look at me'. It's thankless in a lot of ways."

### **UPWARD MOBILITY**

The medical profession is a male dominated hierarchy in terms of security, positions of power, and areas of specialization. However, this hierarchy is slowly being reconstructed as more women move into the profession, which for generations, largely reflected two levels -- doctors (men) and nurses (women), interspersed with female administrators such as ward sister, and matron. The present structure of the medical profession has five tiers, defined in ascending order as house officer, senior house officer, registrar, associate consultant/consultant, and senior consultant/head of department. Numerically, both the ratio and the hierarchy across the fourteen disciplines are still dominated by men, and even the ratio of male to female doctors at the lower levels favours males. Women are only one-quarter of the doctors in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

The number of women in medicine today nullifies the historical perception that women are not good in science. The statement should have been, that women never got the opportunity to discover whether or not they were good in science. Women's success

in medicine suggests that educational and occupational opportunity in society was sex related and not gender neutral.

Women expressed similar observations in terms of their position in the profession. And although many barriers that nurtured their exclusion have been removed, they believe they are up against other barriers that are intricately linked to history, and which history will perhaps take care of. One female consultant articulated her feelings about the situation of women this way:

"Most of the top positions are still held by men. If you look at them, what happens is that people who are in those positions are still relatively young so you have a long way to go and most women don't want to hang around until that person retires, which is the only time you're going to get rid of them.

Despite the fact that only a quarter of the doctors in the profession are women, there is, among them, a group of influential and prominent role models for young women. The pediatrics consultant in private practice saw herself in such a role:

"I think one of the advantages of my getting to the top is that it gave other women encouragement. I myself, have sort of tried to encourage them to go ahead and get their post-graduate training because, before you see, there weren't many jobs open to women and it was felt that even if you did it, you wouldn't get ahead. But since then, we've had several women appointed as consultants and that means a lot of encouragement to the others. And more and more, women are going into medicine."

**Table 13**  
**The Queen Elizabeth Hospital - Barbados**  
**Allocation of Doctors by Level, by Sex, for the**  
**2nd Quarter April 1 - June 30, 1992**

Level	1991		1992		%Change Females
	M	F	M	F	
Senior Consult	91.7	8.3	83.3	17.0	+09.
Assoc./Consult	86.0	14.0	80.0	20.0	+06.
Registrar	82.8	17.2	72.5	27.5	+10.3
Sen House Off.	78.0	22.0	81.0	19.0	-03.
House Officer	68.0	32.0	67.0	33.0	+01.

Source: Queen Elizabeth Hospital Roster for medical staff for second quarter, 1992.

As can be seen from the above table, the medical staff at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Barbados, operates within a seemingly confined structure, ranging from House Officer to Head of Department/senior Consultant. The hospital has a total of 137 doctors, of whom 22% are female. At every level of the hierarchy then, and understandably so, given the recency of women in the profession, there is a dominance of men, according to the allocation of staff for the second quarter of 1992 (April 1, 1992-June 30, 1992). Women make up 17% of the senior consultants, 20% of the associate consultant/consultants, 27.5% of the registrars, 19% of senior House Officers, and 33% of house officers. Men, on the other hand, dominate the medical spectrum accounting for 83.3% of the senior consultant/head of department positions, while they accounted for 80% of positions at the associate consultant/ consultant level.

These figures specifically represent an allocation of doctors on a rotation basis in terms of responsibilities for a given period, and they are nominated. They are not allocated in terms of promotion. However, the allocations do have important implications for men and women in the system, as they provide the opportunity to obtain important levels of experience and responsibility from which one acquires valuable administrative skills. The following table provides a distribution of doctors by discipline at the QEH.

**Table 14**  
**Queen Elizabeth Hospital**  
**Distribution of Doctors by Discipline,**  
**by sex, 1992**

Discipline	Male	Female	Number
Medicine	71.4	28.6	21
Surgery	86.9	13.0	23
Ob.& G.	60.0	40.0	15
Paediatrics	50.0	50.0	12
Ophthalmology	88.9	11.1	09
Psychiatry	100.0	-	01
Anaesthe/ology	64.3	35.7	14
E.N.T.	100.0	-	05
Radiotherapy	100.0	-	03
Radiology	75.0	25.0	04
Pathology	50.0	50.0	06
Gen. Practice	50.0	50.0	02
Acc.&Emergency	75.0	25.0	20
Community Med.	50.0	50.0	20
Total Number	-	-	137

Source: Official statistics from Barbados Ministry of Health, 1992.



Analysis of the disciplines indicates that numerically, the highest levels of female representation were in the disciplines of medicine, obstetrics and gynaecology, and pediatrics, with each having six women or accounting for 28.6%, 40.% and 50.% of the positions respectively, while anaesthesia, and accident and emergency medicine each had five women. The table shows that men accounted for 86.9% (or 20) of the surgeons, the largest representation of men in any discipline. Medicine, and accident and emergency medicine, equally important and demanding disciplines, were second with 15 male doctors in each area. Obstetrics and gynaecology, and pediatrics, both classified by doctors as female orientated, represent 60% ( or 9) and 50% (6) males, respectively.

One woman talks about the experience of women in this traditionally perceived male domain. Having to fight harder and prove oneself is a major part of that general experience:

"...the profession is very strong in male dominance ... we are aware that we have to fight harder and work a little harder to get where we want. Plus there is still male prejudice really, and I think that we give ... this is a generalization now, but I think we give a lot and put a lot into whatever we are doing and therefore you must get results along the line. I think we're beginning to see it already, you know, women are already emerging at the top of organizations and it's going to become more and more like that."

Their minority status in this "male profession" suggests to women that they must work harder and fight harder to achieve the same rewards that men receive. Such a differential in expectation based on sex, points once more to gender inequality in the profession and by virtue of the profession's maleness, women must give more to obtain the same results as the men. When asked if she thought men saw women as a threat she was very adamant in her response: "yes, I don't have to think about that ... definitely". She also

points out that competition in the medical profession is only observed at the consultant level:

"It's when you get to the consultant level -- having to compete for the jobs. What we apply for is a consultant's job and depends on whether you finished post-grad qualifications, and there is a vacancy or not. There are a limited number of positions, but once you qualify, it doesn't matter whether you are male or female. The person who is best qualified will get the job."

Equality seems to exist at the consultant level and one's sex is of no importance since the person best qualified will get the job. Given the fact therefore that women find it extremely difficult to go on to post-graduate studies, and as a result only few do, predictions are that at the level of consultant, women will remain a very small minority as family responsibilities do not hold men back, allowing the numeric differential to persist. This woman nevertheless, has reached the top in her field and enjoys her accomplishments as she explains: "I have reached the ultimate, because once you reach the level of consultant, that's the top. The only other thing you would achieve is being head of the department, which is a rotated position, so there's no further I can go".

The private practice pediatrician, speaking of her own experience points out that professional growth for women brings with it great sacrifices, the most common one being family life. From her perspective, family life usually suffers, and she states:

"you find that you have to make a decision to cut out on some things and you find that if you are going to get to the top, your family life suffers, because it is that extra that you have to put in. I find that as a woman, you are very conscious of it, and you don't want the man to say that 'o.k. she's not performing'. So even although you have a family, you want still to be in there doing your work so you can compare with the men. And you are always aware of this, you know, because some employers don't employ the women because they go off on maternity leave, they go off sick, they have to run somewhere with the children. I think I'm aware of

this as a doctor and that you have to compare equally with your male counterparts."

If one juxtaposes her professional success and her private life, one would clearly understand her firm belief that there are sacrifices and that such success may result in failure in marriage, as she argued one will suffer. Divorced, she had been described by many of her colleagues, both male and female, as an extremely bright woman, and in speaking of her rise to the top, she found it relatively easy. Of her 24 years in the profession, she had been a specialist for 18 years and saw her success as encouragement for other women:

"Strangely enough, it was not as difficult as I thought, you know. I started out the first degree on a scholarship and for the post-graduate I had a Commonwealth Scholarship. I was pleasantly surprised at how easy it was to be a post-grad because in a sense, there is membership, what I would call the positions ... where everybody tells you how difficult the exam is and normally only 10% of the candidates taking it pass. And it's built up to be such a hard exam, and when it's all over, you don't realize it's finished, you know, you're surprised. And once I got that, it was just a matter of moving to consultant's post. Of course, I suppose it was a little bit peculiar too, because I was the first Barbadian female consultant appointed to a position, which obviously, had always been held by men."

How do men see women emerging in the profession? One male doctor didn't see enough women in the profession so far to really make a difference at the higher levels, even though he agreed there are more women in medicine today who are excelling and moving up through the system.

"There are still fewer women in medicine now. It's not a 50-50 thing yet eh! But as time goes by, the people at the top are going to reflect the percentages of those entering below. But don't think there is anything preventing women from aspiring to go to the top of the field. I think they may be at an advantage, really. I always find that when women go into something, they go for it, and *are more efficient than the men are*. But in probably ten to fifteen years or probably even longer, I do not see the

male predominance that it has been."

Academically and socially, women can get to the top but as the majority of the sample have stated, certain structures already in place become intervening barriers for women. This male resident explains the demanding nature of some disciplines which militates against women's advancement:

"Medicine is a very high stress area and some of them [women] do not cope as well as ... not as they should, ... but as well as they can. In other words, it has been four years now since I've seen more females with stress related problems than males. I don't know the reason for that, but then on the other hand, some women do it very well. They do very, very well with related problems. Areas like emergency medicine, orthopedics, you know, they tend not to do so well. But other areas like medicine, psychiatry, pediatrics, they are there. Maybe it's the particular field. Emergency is a high stress area. I can speak of that because I'm there. It is very dynamic. A lot of work and if you don't organize yourself properly, you can get caught up. But there are some that do well in that field."

This seems to suggest a gender difference in experience in these particular areas. Could this be that family life is a factor in the way in which these women cope in these difficult areas? When asked if these particular women were married or single, he was emphatic in his response: "Single, single, single, single, single. Specifically three in the last two years. That may sound like a small number, but it is a big number when you consider the population of the staff". Perhaps then, this explains why some women with families avoid these high stress disciplines.

Given the fact that the increasing number of women in the profession is enough to make their presence felt, the doctor is still to some extent seen as male, perhaps subconsciously so, as observed in this male doctor's explanation of upward mobility in the profession.

"In our Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the opportunity is there for the doctors who have passed up through the university of the West Indies ... who start as the junior house officer and that sort of thing. Then *he* goes to senior house officer. Now if *he* shows promise and *he* was a good student and *he* wants to go in a particular field in post-graduation, the opportunities are there for the ones who are brilliant because the jobs here are limited. (emphasis added)

## **JOB SATISFACTION**

Job satisfaction in the profession has become multi-dimensional for women and unlike other professions, it is often based on slight variations of specialization, type of practice, and quality of service available to patients, among others. After having qualified as a medical doctor, one chooses an area of specialization. But where men were able to make a choice relatively easy, many women (5) were uncertain of their preferred discipline. Job satisfaction though high, generally tended to revolve around the choice of specialization. Choosing the specialization was the problem. The senior female consultant in surgery explains:

"When I finished med school, I wanted to do either pathology ... a choice between pathology and pediatrics. You have to do your internship where you would take two specialities. Then the other thing is, I started off with obstetrics and gynaecology and I didn't like that ... too many women ... only women. And it left out the very young and the very old. So I found it very depressing. When I went to pediatrics, it wasn't too bad except that there were very tiny babies who were sick, they die very quickly. One minute they are around and the next minute, they are at death's door and that made me believe that medicine is all talk and talk. They give you some tablets, it helped them for a little while and after three months, they were still taking the same tablets."

Clearly, her expectations of the role of medicine, and the doctor for that matter, were not being realized in terms of effectiveness. And in trying to find the specialization which allowed her to be effective and at the same time enjoy her work, she moved

through the disciplines to determine which offered her the satisfaction she was seeking. Each area she moved into, was turned down because of some problem, varying in each instance:

"I figured no, there must be somewhere or something that you can do to cure and you tell the patient 'goodbye, nice having met you'. So I moved from there [pediatrics] to surgery. It was interesting. At least here you have the chance to tell the patient 'goodbye, I had the chance to do something for you'. If something is wrong, you can fix it. So even when I finished that, I still had the sort of problem [not being satisfied] and I thought I would have been better in pathology. I went down to pathology and I didn't last very long. Did 13 days there for the simple reason that having come from surgery, I think I like being with people. You had people to talk to.

"The second thing is, in surgery, you've got to look and see what is happening, so you have to operate and take out this and take out that. Sure you can get the same in pathology, but when you're in pathology, the first thing you notice when you touch the thing is, it's cold. It's a corpse and it's not going to make a scrap of difference any more. You just have the answers at the end but that's no use to you. And not only that, but the specimens that came down to you let's say alright you cut them to examine them. You say the patient has x, y, and z. But when you don't have any say as to what happens to that patient, that's the part I missed. Having decided that somebody has cancer, yes, where do you go from there and that's what I wanted to do, so I went back to school. And to think I never reconsidered, and so I ended up in surgery."

This woman projects two main concerns. Firstly, she contends that the role of medicine and the doctor is to make a sick person better. There should be a healthy conclusion to treatment ... not death. Secondly, the doctor should enjoy the work s/he is performing in the profession. Espousing a link between job satisfaction and effectiveness in one's specialization, she uses this to clarify why she moved through the disciplines before settling in surgery.

A young female intern, however, planning to go into family medicine, was deeply

critical of the surgery department that the consultant found so fulfilling:

"... It is quite depressing from my point of view. I saw a lot of amputations, mutilations. I think, what are we really doing to the people? I don't know if it's because we don't have the facilities here or it's just the general approach. Well, he's diabetic, he's going to lose the leg. You know, that's the attitude! I'm not sure that I was kind of impressed after doing surgery at what we're offering people here surgically. I'm not talking about acute appendix. I'm talking about amputations and rehabilitation. To see the heartache people go through. They're never the same again. I mean every week it's two or three amputations."

She was not only critical of policy (or capacity) but she also found the amputations personally stressful, and meeting, or dodging, the relatives too. Empathising with the relatives, she felt that medicine as a science was not effective and she saw it as failing the patient:

"While I was going through it, I was saying all along like If I meet up somebody, I was saying I hope I don't have to witness this amputation. I hope I don't have to see it. Or I would shy away from it as much as possible because of the relatives. If I see the relatives, I would not really dodge them but avoid them because they are so concerned... you can't really say anything."

One of the doctors at the psychiatric hospital was very specific in her description of job satisfaction. Pointing to the level of independence, and the confidence developed from making a diagnosis and making decisions when she worked in the casualty, her level of job satisfaction was high. She explains:

"So having graduated, I thought I would do pediatrics which is usually a very feminine discipline, not unlike psychiatry. Both of them have a fair amount of females. The thing about both of them is that they deal with people who are helpless, so they may be related to the mothering instinct in the female. So I applied for pediatrics and there was no vacancy at the time, and I said 'well look, do another three months in casualty and hold on and wait' but at the same time, I was encouraged by Dr. M. to come here. And I said 'well this is how I'm going to do it."

"I'll do psychiatry in the day, and casualty sessions at night and on weekends, because I really like casualty. Emergency medicine is very exciting. And the thing about casualty is, it's interesting, and had it been a discipline that we could go into at that time to avoid going abroad, it would have been an option. It may not have been the choice, but it could have been an option. At the end of the day, you go home, and *it is the type of area that you can be a family person and do a great job* and hand over your patients and know that they are being taken care of. And you don't have to look at them and wonder what they are doing overnight or anything like that, that they move on."

The demands of the discipline are again evaluated in relation to its compatibility with family life, and the joys of the medical profession. But she too, expresses her personal enjoyment from the actual work, and a genuine interest in the patient's condition. And the joy of medicine?

"It is the variety. It is the independence that you have as a worker. You see how many patients in a day? And they are your patients. You independently make decisions. You learn to be confident about your diagnoses. You have relationships with people within the hospital structure which you build on, and you keep in touch with every single discipline. *It's medicine at its peak to me*, you know, doing emergency and casualty work in general. So I was supposed to be waiting, and still there was no vacancy. Pediatrics seem to be very full. So I got more and more attached here. And then when they did call me from pediatrics, I said 'you know, I can't make that decision now, I think I'll just stay in psychiatry for a while and see what happens' ...and I'm still here. So it was not, what we would we call an aggressive decision. It was actually a decision that was made over time and growing into the decision."

The public health specialist expresses indecision also but for different reasons:

"After dermatology, my next choice was obstetrics and gynaecology because I did very well in my finals. I got honours in that, I loved it. But I knew at the time, I was sensible enough to say 'well look, *this is a job which demands a lot of a woman, which is my first priority?*' And I put my family first. So I didn't do O&G. So in a sense, I would say I put my career second."

*Putting the family first* has been the decision for the majority of the women and



they have admitted that by so doing they have put a limit on their level of achievement in order to raise their children. In other words, where men have created a glass ceiling for the progressive minded career woman, these women have created for themselves, what can perhaps be described as an *opaque ceiling*. It has definite limits but limits which they have imposed upon themselves. They know it's there and they have decided that their ultimate commitment is to their children, because it seems they have not been able to teach the men how to fully share the responsibilities of the family.

This is one of the many different strategies women have devised to cope with career and family, none of the strategies however, seem to involve educating the man about the conflicts women experience. Instead, they find different ways to harmonize the two jobs to create a happy medium. But the general complaint is that women find it extremely difficult to manage a profession, particularly medicine, while carrying the full responsibility of the family and this woman states: "For me it is difficult. It is definitely a dichotomy. My husband is a consultant serving at the hospital but in the relationship, I'm the one who looks after the children".

In the home there seems to be a reversal of roles: adopting the characteristics of the male in the workplace the woman is transformed into the reliable, resourceful, capable, sensitive, understanding decision-maker that the man is defined as in the workplace. But in the home, he becomes dependent, helpless, unreliable, incompetent and less knowledgeable -- the characteristics once used to define the woman in the workplace.

Another woman in private practice, speaks about her job satisfaction and what

working in the profession is like for women:

"I have great job satisfaction. I really do. I enjoy what I do. It's tiring, it's demanding, but at the end of the day, it's very worthwhile. You do work with a lot of deadlines, and it's not just for family. I mean I'm involved in various things and I seem to be constantly running to meetings or I'm meeting some deadline for something I'm preparing or whatever. But I think life is a little bit like that. I think that if I didn't have any children, and if I wasn't married, I suspect I would still be running and meeting deadlines. I'm not sure this is purely because of family. You have to go to the supermarket, you have to organize food at home, you have to make sure the house is being run o.k. Even though you have help at home. *The responsibility does land on the woman in these circumstances.*"

Pointing to the constraints imposed on her through children and marriage, this woman explains the difficulties of merging a career and family. And even though she enjoys the profession, she has created a temporary ceiling for herself because her responsibility to her family supersedes the commitment necessary to advance her career.

The anaesthetist, who works with her surgeon husband, states:

"I enjoyed almost every area of medicine that I practised. I sometimes find it very difficult because there are so many things that I have to keep an eye on, things other than medicine. *In terms of my academic and research aspects, I have also put that on hold because of the kids and my marriage and because there is only so much I can do at one time.* And I like if I'm going to do something I'm going to do it properly or not at all."

Job satisfaction for one of the consultants in pediatrics was spasmodic, nevertheless, she enjoys the discipline in which she has been for 17 years, and has no plans to change: "Like any other profession there are ups and downs but certainly more ups than downs. So we're (she and her doctor husband) are fairly satisfied right now. That's why I chose the field and I've stayed in it because many people change their field and go into another. I have been doing pediatrics since 1975 now, sixteen years." By

ruling out other areas of specialization based on the services offered she decided pediatrics was the one that would offer her job satisfaction and she explains:

"Well one thing is that I don't care to deal with elderly people with strokes, and heart disease and senility. I don't like obstetrics because I don't care for stitches and episiotomies, and termination of pregnancies which is a gynaecological function. And I don't really like family practice. I like hospital care and that's why I chose pediatrics. We don't have a lot of deaths in pediatrics and most children don't give problems with diagnosis when they are talking to you like the older people, so it's sort of more objective."

Expressing the human side of the doctor this woman indicates that the doctor can indeed become emotionally involved and can empathize with the patient: strokes, senility, stitches, episiotomies, termination of pregnancies can easily arouse the emotions of this woman who, as a result, chooses to stay away from such areas. Men seem to have fewer considerations for these aspects of the profession which seem not to be a factor in their level of job satisfaction. Except for the dentist, none of the men articulated any uncertainty in deciding on their discipline, nor did they seem to relate choice of discipline to job satisfaction. Some spoke of the demands and pressures, but job satisfaction seemed not to have been weighed in the choice of any specific discipline, except in the case of the dentist:

"I wanted to do something that was also challenging and gave me enough money to support my family without having to worry [about family support]." But above and beyond all of this, I like to be my own boss, to work with my hands, and to make enough money to support my family."

When counselling children on career choice, the dentist remembers his own career uncertainty and cautions them to aspire to what they want to do and not what others want them to do, stating that:

" I really enjoy what I'm doing. These are the things that I think about when I'm going to advise anybody about what they want as a job. When I talk to kids, I always tell them, 'you know, don't do what other people would like you to do, but do something that you know you will be happy at.' Because every morning when I get up, I don't ever say 'oh my God, not again!' I look forward to coming here. And I enjoy it. Every patient is different and I enjoy working with people."

Decision-making therefore takes various forms. For women much of it depended on their family life and how they interacted with the profession on an individual basis. Husbands' role in the family helps to determine the extent to which women are able to choose their specialization. In other words, women tended to avoid those specializations that were overly demanding particularly in terms of hours. But are they all satisfied in their profession? The entire sample was generally satisfied. They all seem to have a profound love for the science. Yet clearly, there is noticeable difference in experience for men and women.

Women articulated an interactive relationship with the profession that seem foreign to men. They were explicit in describing their experiences in their jobs in a way that the emotions could be extracted, making profound distinctions between just doing the job and really enjoying the job. And they moved around and experienced working in various disciplines until they found the areas where they were most effective and happy. Men were characteristically less explicit in identifying job satisfaction and unlike the women, they never indicated moving around the disciplines nor did they speak in terms of the effectiveness of the role of medicine for the patient. Consequently, it was difficult to determine how men really felt about their work or their patients or to sense their emotional involvement, as the consultant in private practice tersely stated "it's of my life".

## **FAMILY LIFE**

Women's presence in the profession has become quite noticeable particularly at the major health care institution where the majority of them are on staff. Of the 64 registered female medical practitioners in Barbados approximately 75 % are employed by the government. Similarly, of the 186 males, the majority (66%) are employed by the government (Ministry of Health statistics, 1993). Numerically however, there are more males than females employed by the Government. The private practice business of the medical profession as well, is to a great degree, operated and controlled by male doctors. So there remain obvious dichotomies in the profession on many levels. But there is a myriad of reasons for these dichotomies, and one must make a further investigation into these patterns to better understand the evolution of the profession as it becomes attractive to both men and women.

The profession has 14 disciplines from which one can choose to specialize and even though they are all equally important in the field of medicine, some disciplines call for more detailed levels of expertise than others. Surgery has been described by both male and female doctors as an extremely high stress discipline, one in which not many women are found. On the other hand, pediatrics, dermatology, and gynaecology were characterized as less stressful and therefore more attractive to women particularly those with families. If this trend continues, there will ultimately be an over representation of women in these disciplines which may eventually become defined for females.

The majority (6) of the women interviewed stated that their choice of discipline and their staff position directly related to their domestic responsibilities. Severely

interrupting their advancement, most of the sacrifices they made revolved around spending more time with their children and caring for their families. In such cases, they settled in disciplines that provided a schedule similar to the 9-5 North American work day. The public health consultant, now divorced, was married to a doctor and has two children. Her career choices were made according to her family life pattern and responsibilities and she draws on her experience to explain this type of situation:

"I had problems with family in the sense that the little girl wanted me. She was the only child and when I was working every other night or every third night and all this thing, you know, she would hold onto me and say 'mummy don't go'. So I found I had to find a job that I could do 8 to 4, and then my husband was out too, so it was difficult. It was largely family, I think, family commitments that made me do 8-4 [work day] but I didn't realize at the time."

And even with this pattern, women still experienced great stress and fatigue and even guilt. Sometimes, these experiences were manifested when their schedules conflicted with their children's school activities. In any event, it becomes the woman's responsibility to resolve these matters by making alternative arrangements for their children. For the four women whose choice of discipline did not revolve around their family life patterns or expectations, a brief analysis will provide some insight into their situation. The female surgeon/consultant stated surgery is a very demanding discipline on various levels. And as if to confirm what others have said about the pressures associated with this discipline and its impact on family life, this female surgeon is not married. Of the three pediatricians who were all consultants, two were married, and one who was divorced explains the pressures that accompany success in the profession,

particularly in relation to women. She further states that a woman's career, even in such high stress areas as medicine where the pressure is great, is hardly ever considered by her husband in terms of assuming domestic responsibilities:

"You will find that even if you have two doctors in a family, *the man goes about his merry way* and the wife still has to do her job and still be in charge of the housework and things like that. So it's an additional strain."

The anaesthetist gives her views of the pressure women in the profession experience and alludes to the profound commitment women make to their family life that men do not make or seem to consider:

"In the high pressure areas where a lot of night duty is called for in a lot of areas and a lot of hours are concerned, I find it is men or single women or women who don't have children whether or not they are married, who are able to continue all the way. But those with children cannot. They weed themselves out so to speak, because *their family responsibilities take priority*. I find that once a woman has almost enough to absolutely decide to want to have children in this society, she's not encouraged to continue her academic pursuits."

"There's always the exception but here [in Barbados], in particular, it is very difficult because even though the university offers some of the programs here, often, they are not completely offered here. So you have to travel overseas to complete them. Or there are some that are not offered and you have to travel overseas completely. And then you run into problems of 'is the husband going or not and what about the children and who will look after them?' I think *women end up staying*."

"Women end up staying" - so their career patterns are affected by family responsibilities. The majority of the women (7) indicated that family responsibilities determine how far a female doctor can go in her career. There were four who chose not to "*end up staying*" and to direct their career differently. All of them made critical sacrifices: one waited 10 years to have a child, one whose husband always went "his

merry way" her marriage ended in divorce, one waited *ad infinitum* to marry and worries she may have forfeited motherhood, and the other has not married. One woman, who is married to a doctor states:

"... the domestic responsibilities are placed at a higher level for women than they are for men. So the woman may continue in her profession at a lower level than she otherwise would have if she didn't have those domestic responsibilities, because in the end, I think many of us still end up doing ... this is doing two jobs, at least. Whereas, a man is seen as free to go ahead and pursue his career while the wife looks after the domestic responsibilities.

*Doing two jobs* has, for a long time, been a familiar and stressful undertaking for women generally. But for career women today, it is more intense, and for the most part, they have found ways to function in both, effectively, giving rise to the now ubiquitous daycare centre. Nevertheless, the profession seems to present a different challenge for women. Women in medicine seem constrained by peculiar demands of the profession which limit their involvement if they are raising a family.

According to these doctors, it is very difficult for them to manage the two jobs and there appear to be constant conflicts between the need to develop their full potential professionally and raising a family. A pediatrician at the QEH, whose career has been guided by her family life pattern and expectations states:

"Well for the first years of my marriage, I used to work one in three nights on call, having to sleep in the hospital and my husband worked one in four nights on call, and he slept in the hospital different nights. And then we would have other commitments, it was difficult in that respect. That affected us in that we had lots of meetings, extra curricular activities to attend, and we worked at two different hospitals. So I depended quite a bit on relatives for things like collecting the child from school and extra activities. I have relatives who assist me."

*I have relatives who assist me.* Where there is paid help in the home or assistance from



relatives with the children, women often interpret this assistance as being their personal assistance, not their spouse's (and one would therefore expect it is the spouse's interpretation as well). But when questioned why their relatives assist her and not her husband, she explains "I should say assist us, because it's our responsibility. In my family it's split down the middle" -- obviously an elicited response. However, she admitted that family life did not affect her husband's career to the same extent as it affected hers even though they are both doctors. This woman's strategy for career advancement seems in direct opposition to that of her female cohorts. She had her first child after 10 years of marriage:

To have said "assist us" is meaningless if at a more profound level the responsibility is understood to be the woman's. "Assist us" should suggest that in the absence of that assistance they both take on the responsibility of doing the work.

"During the residency, it is very difficult to have a baby and manage to look after your baby because of sleeping out all the time and your husband is also a doctor. So it means you would probably have to send the child to someone to be looked after or have a live-in housekeeper, which to me, is not the idea of raising a child. So I didn't have my first child until I came here after a few years."

The psychiatrist who postponed marriage for a number of years and worries that she may have forfeited the opportunity to be reproductive states:

"...The woman also has to be one who is willing to sacrifice family, and you will find that a lot of them who have tried to marry the two, one has failed. It is either that they don't continue in their careers to the point that they could reach, ... the height that they could reach. And I have a couple of friends and colleagues in mind when I say that, who had loads of ambition and they got married, and that ambition has not gone, but it has had to abate. And some of them resent their husbands for it. Some of them resent their children for it, because they read in them they have not achieved, they have not fulfilled their full potential."

So the career ambitions lag in the background and breed frustration as the woman feels capable of achieving but the mechanisms in place dictate that she is limited in achieving her goals ... a career and a family, like they so often allow men to do.

Pre-empting family life with career advancement women postpone marriage and/or family as a strategy of coping with the situation. This consultant identifies serious consequences of this strategy and states her own case to support her argument:

"In my case now, I waited *ad infinitum* to get married, so I have just gotten married. And *I sacrificed children*. Not that I wanted to, but the body is not a body of a 25-year old. There are probably complications there."

Even in the absence of children she finds that the domestic responsibilities add a lot of stress because of the demands of her job and the related extra curricular activities in which she is involved:

"I do everything. But I am feeling distressed over that now because I also keep up my work out there. And in actual fact, right at this period, it is extremely stressful because I am also the general secretary of BAMP and I'm on the child care board, which is three meetings a week. So I'm still doing my pediatrics [via the child care board]. And I stretch myself a little thin, and this is also without transport because we share a car still."

Women also become involved in various organizations in the community in order to keep abreast with their male colleagues. It is really only in the home that the competition subsides. This woman is highly stressed, and stretches herself a little thin, but still prefers to do aspects of housework herself. One wonders therefore, how much is she responsible for the stress which she experiences:

"I am obsessional which is a trait of a lot of doctors, be it male or female. I like things done at a certain time and in a certain order. For instance, I don't wash Monday through Thursday. But on Fridays, up to Sunday. Sometimes in the evenings after 7:00 o'clock, I'm washing. I

have a routine about how I wash and if somebody comes in there and does it, they annoy me. So I don't even ask, I don't even suggest."

This situation appears to be the inverse of the traditional doctor/ husband and housewife. As the breadwinner in the household, she is reluctant to request domestic assistance from her husband, who is unemployed. But why is he not fulfilling the role of the newly created househusband? Some academics have argued that men do not want to share the domestic responsibilities but as this woman admits, some women prefer to perform these chores, thereby creating their own self-styled stress.

The female private practitioner who curtailed her career ambitions to raise her two children and care for her family, stated:

"In terms of my own family structure, I made the decision, which was obviously because I was female. I had to choose between doing post-graduate which would have involved leaving home and leaving young children and going away for a while. And I agonized over that for a few years and eventually decided that was not my priority. *My priority had to be my children and my home.* So because of that, obviously as a woman, *there was a direction in which I couldn't follow but it was my decision rather than one stopping me from pursuing it* [post-grad work]."

But did she ever have the desire to go on to post-graduate studies when the children were older?

"I would have liked to do some post-graduate work. What has always deterred me was the fact that I had these young children. And even when they weren't so young, there was never a stage at which I felt happy in going away for six months or a year and that sort of thing. *I do feel guilty* about the demands of my profession. Initially, when they were babies I stayed home for a while. When I went back to work, *I have always had that guilt trip* and I think because of that, I try to put in a lot of extra time with the children."

Why is it that women, who already take on most of the responsibility for childrearing,

experience this guilt trip? This woman quickly supplied the answer: "I think men put us through it to a great extent. I think we are very much conditioned into feeling that women should be the homemakers and if you aren't, in a way you're not conforming to what society expects of you. So I think that men very much condition us into this."

Men generally do not seem to see the situation the same way. Her husband, also a doctor interviewed, responded quite casually to the question on what impact family life has on their careers: "that kind of work is taken care of". Indeed, this refers specifically to the domestic aspects of family life, but hardly considers the psychological and emotional demands that women seem to carry one hundred per cent. The views men and women have of family and careers are diametrically opposed. While he says "that kind of work is taken care of" she emphatically states: "Oh no, it doesn't affect men's careers. They go right on and women take care of taking up the slack, you know."

Marrying later or starting a family later, are definite choices women are now making. In some cases, they choose not to marry and not to have a family at all. Certainly therefore, career advancement is far more costly for women, than it is for men and because of this, some women prefer to struggle with the conflict of combining both. And for those who postpone children until after career advancement, this woman states: "I think it is difficult at 40 years old to be raising a one or a two-year old child and you're also putting a generation gap of 40 years between you and your children. Again, on balance, I still would go for the way in which I have done it, which is to try and combine both."

Indeed, conflict of these two jobs - family life and career, has become the universal situation of career women. It seems there must always be a choice between

career and family, and the problems and sacrifices generated by combining the two: a choice that men never seem to have to consider. Is it the ultimate ambition of all women to achieve the two things?

According to the female intern, some women are not necessarily concerned with reaching the very top in their career by imposing the opaque ceiling and this may be another coping strategy in combining the two jobs. She states her own strategy:

"I think I'm going to shift my priorities as time goes on. What I want to do is probably finish my internship, then in the next two or so years after that, probably think about a family and juggle the two. I don't mind taking time off from work and having kids and then going back to work. I don't mind that. My mother did that and she managed. Of course she did nursing, which is a little different."

Recognizing that women experience some conflict in terms of years needed to build a career and to raise a family, she noted that the situation is different for men, which historically has propelled them into positions of power and male privilege:

"It seems more so with women than men. It is something you can't get away from. When you hit 40 [years of age], your chances are going down, and unfortunately, the years and all the time you spent studying or the years that I would be building my profession are the same reproductive years. *It's a conflict that way.*"

What these views have emphasized is that women in medicine have problems that seem quite foreign to men in the same profession, and quite unlike women in other professions. While men can pursue their career to its fullest with relative ease whether or not they are married and have a family, women, in order to have the same choice, must make important sacrifices. And in some cases, they never reach that desired level. To pursue the career first, they run the risk of sacrificing marriage or children, sometimes both. If they combine the two, they circumvent their ambitions and settle for

less than their initial goal or full potential. And if they decide to have their family first, they also run the risk of forfeiting some of their career ambitions. Career women do indeed seem to be constrained by a complex dilemma.

These various perspectives have provided a better understanding of women's need to pursue a career and they also provide a microscopic analysis of the core of the problems which women experience in trying to combine a profession and raising a family. The problem as articulated by the women interviewed, is not so much to do with being married, as it is to do with childbearing and childrearing and the conflict brought on by those reproductive years coinciding with the same years needed for professional growth. It would seem that women in the medical profession can only have the same choices and advantages as their male cohorts if they themselves had wives and not husbands.

How do men react to these problems which women have articulated? And does family life affect them similarly? Men's reactions classify them differently. Where a general pattern emerged for women, men projected a more traditional view, sometimes a modern approach, and at other times a moderate approach. One man whose traditional outlook seems interwoven with his cultural and religious background, was very adamant in his views of family life:

"...the family definitely is affected one way or the other. Now if the male professional is going up the ladder, the family will not be as affected as if the female professional is moving up the ladder. I have very strong views that in order for you to have a closely kn. family, it is either the father or the mother who must look after those kids, or both together. As soon as you have both of them vying in the professional arena and a third party looking after them, those kids are going to grow up taking life in a particular perspective."

A rather extreme view in modern Barbadian society, this man is well steeped in his religious, and cultural beliefs. And of the sample interviewed, this doctor was the only one to approach the problems of career women from a religious standpoint. However, in acknowledging that husbands and wives do go out to work, he gave his reaction to the way this may affect their career growth:

"...it will affect the woman more. And then, any problems that the children have in bringing them up, if the child gets sick, or you have to run to the school, anything like that, most of the time *the burden falls on the mother*. And even then when the mother comes home in the evening, she still has to see to the well-being of those kids, not the father. So it's an excess load on her. And if excess loads are in any way going to affect your performance, I'm not saying your performance will suffer, it will be affected."

"*The burden falls on the mother*" in his own particular case as well since he is the breadwinner. His wife is a homemaker but it appears that she never did, and still does not, have the choice to do other things if she wanted to. He seems to make decisions for her:

"Well to be honest with you, my wife is not a professional. She is a housewife, but she manages the entire financial empire. She's very competent, she manages the expense accounts, she pays all the bills, electric, water, telephone, gas ... she manages the home, she pays the secretaries, national insurance, all of that part of the work. She has to look after the home. She has to look after the kids. All I do is mainly on weekends if she says 'let us go for a drive, let us go with the kids or the minute I come home she will say 'look, there's a meeting at the school, you should go'. I'd say, I'm too busy', *and she'll have to go.*"

Continuing to express his opinion, it became quite clear that he makes all the decisions for his wife whom he describes as a housewife when in fact, she is his office manager! And he seems to be a part-time father while she carries the double workload of housewife and office manager. He continues:

"...at a time I thought of *letting her* do a course in accounting, etc., but then I mean, obviously, I would have to look after the family while she is studying and I can't manage. You see when a doctor practises medicine, *he goes home, he's tired*. If he has the kids to manage, he's something else. Women have that reliance where they can manage the kids where men cannot."

To acknowledge that a doctor goes home tired is important even though his admission is to justify his uninvolved in domestic responsibilities. Nevertheless, if the male doctor gets tired, so too does the female, but she must still look after the children and the home in this depleted state. Obviously, this man ignores the physical demands of childrearing and housework in addition to the administrative work his wife does. Women who have two jobs - have expressed the fatigue they experience daily.

The dentist, in the same age group articulated an entirely different view. This man is divorced, and his wife is not a professional either, and in the face of tradition, this "tired" doctor has their two children in his care, even though he legally shares joint custody with his wife.

"It was a traditional situation for women to take the responsibility for taking care of the kids and the household work. But when you are dealing with a modern woman now, ... *there was that need on my wife's part to establish her own identity*. I think she felt in competition with me. But in the traditional setting where the wife is still in control of the domestic situation, I have no problem with that. I would never allow my profession to be in competition with my family life. My profession, was only something that would make my family life better, that's all it was. But in the traditional setting, where the wife is at home and what not, if that's what she wants, fine with me. The profession should enhance your family life, not detract from it."

A male intern, offers a traditional view:

"...eventually, they have children and one person has to be more at home than the other. I guess especially since the woman is the one that does the childbearing she's the one that has to stay home much of the time,



especially in the early years of childhood."

This man went on to discuss how this limits the potential of the woman professionally "... I agree that marriage does limit their potential when it comes to specialization ... in fact, that's why you see females who go into specialist courses *end up single*. It's a very common thing, especially surgeons. You hardly see a female surgeon that is married, at least not in Barbados. I'm talking about a couple of them ... they are all single."

According to this doctor, "*end up single*" seems to evoke negativity as a result of being single. But the problem does not revolve around being single. Instead, it is in having to choose between career and family. Many single career women have expressed happiness in themselves such as the female surgeon/consultant. Here again the conflict between career and family life presents a profound problem for women in the profession that men do not experience and as one female doctor stated earlier, not many women are able to merge the two successfully. But this seems more specific to the medical profession. This intern spoke about his personal ambitions and desires:

"...I personally won't like to get married and have any children before I finish my specialist courses. For the mother it is much more difficult than it is for the man. I will remain single I guess, for now."

To finish his specialist courses before he gets married and have children is a luxury men can easily enjoy but which often eludes women because of their reproductive years. Women have a reproductive capacity for a given period of their lives, which happens to coincide with the very years necessary for career development. And even when men decide to marry before specializing, their family life has little effect, if any,

on their professional advancement as they have been socialized to pass on this responsibility to women. The demands of both family life and career are enormous for women and they have only a limited number of options: They either pursue the career and postpone marriage and family; they can pursue both but with different levels of emphasis; they can maximize the pursuit of both. But it is the general belief of both women and men that women are faced with a very delicate situation in trying to accomplish both and failure in one is often the outcome. Nevertheless, women demonstrate that they play a significant role in the society but due to the traditional demands placed on them as women, they experience major problems in professions such as medicine. The male consultant in private practice forecast women's role in a changing Barbadian society:

"I believe at the moment, probably women own more homes in Barbados than men. I would confidently expect that women will translate that large acquiring of responsibility which they historically held in Barbados into dominance right through the whole society not only at the professional level. I think we are well on the way to seeing a female dominated society".

On the other hand, a young female doctor gave a different view of the situation. She does not think the hierarchy will undergo much change even though there will be women in top positions:

".... I don't think it will change that much. I think there will be women in top positions. There always will be. The women in the Ministry (of Health) that we all know, are in the hierarchy. Women are running the show. But I still think that the bulk of the real, real top people will be men because of their biology. And I think women will allow the men to forge ahead so that they can sit down and have the family that they want and they will allow them to a certain extent to go ahead."

Women have had to step aside when the opportunities were not available to them. But

when they have to step aside today because the double load they carry denies them the opportunity to pursue their ambitions, it creates major conflict and frustration for them. It becomes a contradiction. This woman believes that biological make-up and traditional values will serve to keep men at the top of the structure because women will want to put their family first even if it means stepping aside for males to move up the ladder. And in response to changes observed in medicine, another woman explains:

"... the woman who does medicine, is at very best, a bright woman, whose family says law or medicine. But I think it's that wanting to do service and liking people. There are not many areas that you can function in medicine and not like people."

That women are generally perceived as being much brighter than men is not a claim being made or alluded to here. What women have stated is that those women who aspire to the major professions are usually brighter than the average man in the same professions. This view is not peculiar to women. Men in the six professions studied have articulated the same sentiment. One man in speaking in general terms about women in the workplace narrows it down a bit:

"Men are one-dimensional whereas women are multi-dimensional. And perhaps it has to do with the difference in their reproductive and nurturing roles. They can function competently on various levels."

This view which characterizes women in the professions as being very bright is also held by very senior and prominent men, those who have spent more than ten years in the respective profession, as well as by those men who recently graduated with some of the women and who are now establishing themselves. Furthermore, both men and women concluded that women coming out of high school and college today are generally more qualified than males, to the point where it is becoming a concern to policy makers in the

school system.

In spite of the fact that the concept of gender-defined jobs is relatively new, the method used to make jobs gender specific has been subtle, direct and precise through the concept of exclusion. Exclusion is a multi-pronged tool that discriminately affected a wide variety of opportunities in society to favour men. And where the exclusion of women from certain activities may have been difficult, as in teaching and nursing, a division based on sex, created invisible barriers for women and held the top administrative posts for men. The success of this concept of exclusion hinged largely on the education system, perhaps the most effective formal system that denied women equal access to educational and career opportunities similar to what men enjoyed.

The rigidity of this system is still highly visible even after about 20 years of reforms aimed at integrating women into mainstream society through a co-educational system. Consequently it will take a number of years, before the representation of women and men in the major professions can be equal.

### **Gendered Jobs**

Recognizing the increasing number of women in the profession over the past ten to fifteen years, this man does not think that the image of the profession has changed. While women's presence has become more obvious, the numerical advantage of men entering the field helps to enhance their male position.

Female doctors are very responsive to the changes designed to promote equality, and for the most part, focus largely on competing equally with men. Women doctors

were reluctant to identify discrimination in the profession. One female pediatrician states:

"... they treat you equally. They talk to you the same way. There is equality throughout and there is also equality in the salaries, which is very important. There are still some jobs that pay women less but it is not so in the medical field. As long as you are a doctor, and you have the same qualifications as the man, you get the same salary."

Discrimination therefore is covert -- not perceived as such. Discrimination may be very subtle. For example, retaining a male structure for males and females in the workforce, implementing guidelines in the workplace which conflict with childrearing responsibilities, having higher expectations of women for the same rewards the average man receives, women have already stated they have to fight harder and work harder. This is an observation made by the majority (15) of the men and women interviewed. Given the lengthy period of time that women were denied access to positions of power and to the field of medicine, there is still no great influx of women queuing up to get into the profession. Perhaps this is because it needs a special kind of serious commitment and sacrifice and seems to threaten the success of a marriage. If one compared the rate of increase in law, commerce, or any other areas of the labour force that women have entered, one would observe that the increase of females in medicine is disproportionate to those areas. Two reasons for this come to mind.

Firstly, the period of study to become a doctor is longer. This suggests graduates in medicine will be less frequent than graduates in other disciplines. Secondly, the nature of the medical field dictates that it attracts those who are genuinely committed to medicine. Thus, in spite of the access available to women, there is apparently only a small number choosing medicine as a career in relation to other fields of study. The same

holds true for men. None the less, small as these number may be, they are sufficiently large to make the female presence noticeable.

Integrating women in all sectors of the labour force has largely been successful, but concomitant problems in trying to implement these changes have surfaced. The exclusion of women for many years, helped to reduce and perhaps inhibit their self-confidence. Therefore, as efforts are made to integrate women into the system, they may sometimes demonstrate a fear of failure because of the barriers imposed upon them. It will be absolutely necessary for them to release their self-confidence and work on changing people's perception of these positions.

Due to the fact that women in medicine are a recent phenomenon in Barbados, the levels at which they are situated in the hierarchy will, undoubtedly, reflect this recency and so too will it reflect their minority status at the various levels. At each level of the hierarchy, women form the minority group except at level one or house officer where they outnumber the men by 2. But even this numerical imbalance places women in the overall structure in a lower status position because it demonstrates that the majority of the women across the spectrum are located at its lowest level. How do the doctors react to this situation? One of the male doctors who has been in the system for quite some time stated: "Most of the women in the system have graduated only in the past 15 years but they will eventually dominate the profession because they are very bright and the men are opting out." A male doctor in his mid-twenties, sums up the situation:

"I don't think there is any discrimination but as there were more men forty or fifty years before, those are obviously going to be the ones at the top now. But they do have a good few prominent women consultants climbing up already. They are establishing themselves. The hierarchy per

se is probably dominated by men now but that is probably because they have been there for long."

Although both male and female doctors have indicated that equality of opportunity does exist, some pointed to areas of medicine deemed to be more attractive to one sex than the other, such as surgery and medicine where there is a small number of females. And though the decision for specialization may come later in one's medical career, it seems that psychologically, a preference remains in mind. One female intern explains how she was making her preference during her internship:

"Perhaps I will gravitate towards family medicine. Family medicine post-graduate degree. That interests me. That is a total all round thing. I don't want to get too specialized at the moment. But right now I'm still in my internship. You have to do two years in your internship and that's five days so it has given me an opportunity to decide what I want to do because I want to think through this as much as possible. But having just finished surgery, *I'm sure I don't want to do surgery.*"

The medical profession specifically in terms of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, still largely reflects a male enclave even with the increasing number of women entering the profession.

It is important to make a cautionary analysis of this data. The absence of women in some disciplines as well as their low representation in others, must not be interpreted in a modern day discriminatory context. Rather, it is a reflection of the historical past when systemic discrimination against women was accepted policy at all levels and in all sectors of society. It has been stated earlier that the medical profession has been dominated by males for generations, in a way consistent with the other professions and institutions in the society. The emergent question therefore is, why does not the medical profession project a more equitable distribution of women similar to some of the other

professions since sex discrimination has been outlawed?

One has to acknowledge that medicine is a profession that calls for a certain type of individual whose commitment to the practice of medicine in most instances is superseded by nothing else. And it is this kind of commitment that plunges women with, or wanting to have, a family into the difficult and perhaps heart wrenching situation of having to make a choice, as well as the often stressful situation of combining the two. Thus, it confers on men a kind of privilege which continues to escape their female cohorts. Consequently, the concept of gender equality in the medical profession in terms of numbers and gender neutral disciplines still seems a long way off, and it will perhaps take much longer to reflect gender equality.

One female explained the demands of some of the disciplines:

"... if you look at obstetrics and gynaecology, Dr. X is not married. In areas like general surgery, there is one lady consultant, she is not married because it is so demanding. I mean I don't think it is more demanding than anything else, but it is the hours, and if you really want to be a good doctor and really serve the patient, then you have to be available when they call. But in any relationship, when it comes to the home the woman is still expected to do everything."

The female surgeon, speaks of the demanding nature of some disciplines which normally pose a problem for women with families:

"What women have said is what they really want. And if they decide they want to have a family as well as a career you will find they will gravitate to those areas of the profession that give them more time to spend with the family. So if they are that way inclined, you will find that they tend to gravitate towards certain areas such as gynaecology, and family practice ... that sort of thing. And even the ones that are not so demanding areas they can still have a family problem."

A male, in speaking specifically of surgery as a choice of discipline, admits it is



A male, in speaking specifically of surgery as a choice of discipline, admits it is perceived as a male domain and is generally made difficult for women:

"I think it's the case that traditionally, it was a male field and right now, there are only males in it and they are dominating. I don't know for a fact but they say *they make it very difficult for a woman*. Why again it's difficult for women is because it is very demanding time-wise and if as a woman you want to have a family, sometimes you cannot put the time that is necessary into it. So that works against the women. It does affect a man too, but the man does not have to be on maternity leave and so on. Children will be crying mummy before they cry daddy because of our socialization. So that has to change in order for the whole thing to change."

It is a well known fact that women have the responsibility of the family but when men use it to justify their progress and women's exclusion from career opportunities, it just does not sound right. I project the image that all families are headed by female single parents. Men seem to exclude and perhaps excuse themselves from this responsibility: "...if as a woman you want to have a family...that works against women". Both men and women have given their own analysis of the situation and despite variations in their analyses, there is a fundamental interconnecting thread that surfaces. The choice of discipline is entirely up to the individual. However, women, particularly married women, are choosing the area of specialization not only according to interest in a given discipline, but more often on the basis of its compatibility with their family life pattern, or their family life expectations. Such considerations and restrictions seldom impinge on the choices of the male doctor, and they seriously inhibit female mobility.

## **Conclusion**

The experience of women in the medical profession is in sharp contrast to that of the men. Women are still perceived as adjuncts in the profession by some of their clients who often address them as 'nurse'. This is not done out of a lack of respect but it is more in accordance with their traditional perception of the doctor being a man. Those patients who have difficulty with this change are generally women in the seventy plus age range. Men are less often known to make this error.

The structure within which the profession operates is a rigid one established centuries ago to reflect those in the profession at the time, but it now fails to acknowledge the increasing number of women who pursue medicine as a career. When the career was male defined, doctors generally had wives at home caring for the children and managing the home. But with the inclusion of women the structure and the way it functions present a serious problem for women doctors with families. Often women with families must re-examine their career aspirations and establish career ceilings (quite unlike the glass ceiling established by men) in order to balance the two jobs. And they also find that they must choose, and sometimes change disciplines, to harmonize their professional and domestic roles.

Women are still the primary care-givers in the family and are perhaps now seen as the 'housewife with a paid job'. Which means that even though she is a full-time member of the workforce in a demanding profession, her full responsibility to the home has not changed. Some women doctors in the study, whose husbands are also physicians,

spoke of adjustments they have had to make both in the home and in their career to balance the three roles of wife, mother and doctor, but their husbands did not have to make any adjustments.

Men seem to enjoy much more professional freedom in terms of discipline, hours, and commitment than their spouses. Women set limits to their professional growth to spend more time caring for their children. And in the case of conflict between school activities and work schedules of parents, the mother/doctor is the parent who has to make alternate arrangements or make herself physically available to cope with that change.

The twenty (20) doctors interviewed projected a dichotomy within the profession along gender lines. Women bring different values to the profession and measure their success in their own terms which often indicate a divergence from the pattern established by men. They spoke in terms of a balanced lifestyle where family and career are critical factors but where they would not allow the profession to dominate or deny their children their own love and affection. To achieve this, women have settled in salaried positions with institutions where their work schedule may better coincide with that of their children's school day.

The private practice of the medical profession is mainly in the hands of men, most of whom have their own individual practice. Medical groups are beginning to surface and they are often run by men with one or two women as part of the team. It is quite common to see male physicians in a private practice having their wives as receptionist/secretary at a front desk. Although this becomes a family business, the

subordinate role of the wife projects an enormous sense of gender inequality, if not in the eyes of the spouses, certainly in the eyes of the patients and other visitors to the office whether or not they are aware of the marital relationship.

## CHAPTER 8

### The Legal Profession

The legal profession in Barbados had been single-sex for most of its history until the late 1960s when women started to return to Barbados after having been called to the Bar in Britain. Consequently, an extremely rigid male network had been created in terms of distribution of work, dominance of the private practice, and the culture of law itself, all of which have historically excluded women. This change in the profession should not be construed as a historical departure from patriarchal structures but rather the acceptance of a small minority, who had demonstrated requisite intelligence and financial backing to make them "respectable" tokens in a profession with a male gender bias that had not been challenged previously. Relegating them to "token" status, they became an *invisible minority* among their male colleagues sometimes when the group was being addressed as their presence was often ignored.

When the UWI faculty of law opened in Barbados in 1970, it threw its doors wide open to women, facilitating entry into the profession for women and men alike. This historic development radically modified the disadvantaged position of women, the structure of the profession, and the image of the wider society. And the underpin to it all, was the availability of free university education. Subsequently, men and women took the opportunity to pursue one of the most lucrative and status acclaimed professions. Some persons, nevertheless, continued to travel abroad to pursue their studies in the laws. Women now form an important component of the student body at Cave Hill

Campus. In the 1992/93 academic year, they accounted for 61 % overall, and 61 % in the faculty of law. And of the 328 lawyers in the profession, 28.7% are women as shown in the table below.

**Table 15**  
**Number of Lawyers in Barbados,**  
**By sex, 1993**

Men	%	Women	%	Total
234	71.3	94	28.7	328

Source: Statistics from the Ministry of Legal  
Affairs, Barbados.

With such an increase of women in the legal field, one questions what factors were responsible for this new interest. The study points to a varying degree of factors between the two groups and even within the groups.

The 10 men and 10 women in the sample were all in the practice of law. However, they portrayed interesting characteristics and differences based on sex. Eight of the women were single while two were married. None of them had children. Six worked in private practice, one, a civil servant, was a magistrate, and three were salaried employees of private organizations. Their years' of experience ranged from one to 23 and they ranged in age from the mid-twenties to the early fifties.

Seven of the men were married and had children, and three were single. All of the men had a private practice, and three, their own chambers. Among the men, was a Queen's Counsel who sat in the Supreme Court. The years' of experience for the men

ranged from four to 42 years, and they were between the ages of 25 and 65 years old.

The following table gives a breakdown of the distribution of lawyers in the country by activity and by sex, for 1993.

**Table 16**  
**Distribution of Lawyers by Activity,**  
**by sex, 1993**

Activity	M %	F %	Number
Priv.Practice & Firms	53.6	15.5	227
Government	08.2	07.3	52
Commerce	01.8	02.7	15
Officers of the Court	03.7	03.0	22
Overseas	03.7	00.0	12
Retired	00.6	00.0	02
Totals	71.3	28.7	328

Source: Statistics from the Ministry of Legal Affairs, Barbados.

The table above shows that the majority (69.1%) of lawyers are attached to a firm or have their own private practice and that the men (53.6%) dominate this area of work compared to 15.5% women. But women, according to statistics, are moving into the commercial sector to the extent that they are the majority (2.7%) over 1.8% males. Of the 22 officers of the court, 45% (or 10) are women. These officers fall under three categories as shown in Table 17 -- magistrates, registrars and judges and account for 6.7% of the overall profession.

## Choosing the Career

Several factors influenced these men and women to go into law. The majority (9) of the women started in the profession as their first job, one woman commenced her studies with a science degree but later switched to law. Eight of the men went into law as their first job even though economics had been the first choice of one man. The other two men were in teaching, and the commercial sector, respectively.

There was a gender difference in choosing a career in the legal profession. Five of the men were influenced by parents and relatives, two by their teachers: one at high school and the other at university. Two others made their decision in their mid teens. The other decided as an adult in the teaching profession. The female magistrate was influenced by television: "it was from watching Perry Mason, honestly. That was my favourite show and I just said to my dad one night 'I want to be a lawyer'. I was also thinking about becoming a teacher, but he was involved in education and said it was hard work with no rewards. Not that law isn't hard, but you might get a little better reward. He left it entirely up to me."

One of the women in commerce, who holds the titles of vice-president, general counsel, and corporate secretary for her organization, explains how she got into the profession:

"I wasn't too sure what I wanted to do and I think my father said 'well why not do economics.' And I said 'well why not!' I didn't have a clue what I wanted to do down the road. At that stage I suppose studying was an end in itself, was still something very much part of me. I wasn't focusing on careers at that point in my life."

Not focusing on careers at that early stage in one's life was quite a common



characteristic of many young adults in the 1960s and even as late as the early 1970s. But the introduction of career guidance counsellors in the school system in the 1980s made a big impact. This woman explains how her career evolved:

"I turned out to be better in political science and worse in economics, so I said when it came to second year when I needed to make a choice ... I went to political science and still wasn't sure what I was going to do. And I think my father again, I think he's the one who really put the thought into my mind. 'Why not do law'. And I said 'well, why not?' ....and I did focus on that more or less as a career. But it really evolved. *I didn't have any burning desire to do anything. I just knew I wanted to do something but I didn't know what it was.*"

Men also experienced career uncertainty. One of the men who has established his own chambers and is also involved in politics, expresses indecision as well:

"I most accidentally came into law because a tutor at Cave Hill [Campus, UWI] told me that I seemed suited for the profession. It was a lady as a matter of fact, and I gave it some thought because after I did my first degree, I found it difficult to get into some areas I wanted to, and I thought I might as well go and do law. Indeed, it gives the opportunity to be self-employed. As a matter of fact, I have not worked for any employer but myself since 1972. So at least, it gives me the opportunity to realize that particular situation where you are self-employed."

Owning one's business is an opportunity more men seem to have than women and maybe it has to do with the financial demands involved. Women have more difficulty obtaining bank loans for these purposes than do men. However, this man further explains that the financial aspects did indeed make it difficult for him initially.

"I wanted to go into my own business at some point in my life and I started quite early. I made a few blunders and I learnt from those. But at the time when I left school, after my first degree, my problem was a lack of money. My first degree was in political science and law. I thought I would pursue the legal end of it, although I was always interested in politics. So it's a three-prong combination, law, politics and business. Some people say politics is a business, complementary, anyways."

Another man's access was more circumstantial:

"Mine was more a question of circumstances. My headmaster, when I was leaving school, recommended me to a firm of solicitors and I got interested in it based on what I heard they do. And I started to study. So I was articled to a private firm and I qualified there. Then they wanted me to stay on to be a partner and I looked at the possibilities for growth outside and opted to spend a few years there, and not accept the partnership but to open my own business, about which I have no regrets."

But does the profession itself hold special interest for him in view of the fact that it was on his teacher's recommendation?

"Yes, being able to assist people in correcting wrongs and establishing rights. And part of it, of course at that stage, was the novelty of it all, you know. And even though the economic side of it would have been some influence, the fact that part of the novelty was the status that it holds. Because whether you are a rich lawyer or a poor lawyer, the fact is that in a small society you're still a lawyer, so the status quo does have the influence on the young impressionable mind."

And it does have an influence on the impressionable mind as it has been more recently in the case of young women. But the number of men going into law has declined over the years, while the number of women is steadily increasing. However, new graduates are realizing that the society cannot adequately absorb the number of lawyers being called to the Bar and women are moving into business operations as in-house legal counsels.

### **Career Aspirations**

Career aspirations for women and men reflected sharp distinctions that were as pronounced as their peers' in the medical profession. That access to the study of law is attainable by both sexes proves to be insufficient evidence that opportunities in the profession are gender neutral. The barriers are not as overt as they once were but a

major challenge for women is to demonstrate that they are equally as good as, and often better than the male lawyer. This is not an easy task, given the structure within which they must operate. Some of the best well-known and respected lawyers in the country are men, with whom the male graduate is able to align himself or even emulate, in a way that seems difficult for the female. The following table gives a breakdown of the officers of the court by title, by sex, and shows that of the eight judges appointed to the courts, there are no females. Nevertheless, the table does show that women are indeed making inroads in other areas: of the nine magistrates five are women, one of whom is chief magistrate, and there are five female registrars, with no male counterparts.

**Table 17**  
**Distribution of Court Officers**  
**by title, by sex, 1993**

Title	Male	Female	Total
Magistrates	4	5	9
Registrars	-	5	5
Judges	8	-	8
Totals	12	10	22

Source: Statistics obtained from the Ministry of Legal Affairs, Barbados.

At the near saturation point in the profession women account for little more than 28% of all lawyers. And as one male Queen's Counsel points out, "Barbados has a population of 250,000 people, and we have roughly in Barbados 250 lawyers. That is one lawyer for every thousand people, and we are not at all a litigious people like, say, the Americans or Trinidadians. And I think those coming out will have a hard time". So the challenge for women is not only to compare equally in terms of effectiveness and

competence, but to transform the perception of the society from seeing the lawyer as a male, to seeing the lawyer as a competent person whether male or female. One man in his practice for 15 years states: "You will still find that perhaps there is a strong bias against women in the legal profession". And he explains:

"This will be more a condition of sex, condition more than anything else. People feel somehow, certainly in the area of criminal law, that they perhaps prefer to be represented by a man. In the other areas of litigation, men perhaps again, will continue to dominate. But I think over time, women will probably dominate more the family law aspects of it, and perhaps mortgages and conveyancing and that sort of thing. Certainly in litigation, it is mostly a very aggressive area of the law, although it doesn't detract from a woman being a good advocate. But it is a societal prejudice that they go for the man to litigate for them."

For such a societal prejudice to permeate a profession which has been opened up to women obviously suggests that there is much more work to be done in addition to extending access to women. Women need to be given every opportunity in the system in much the same way that men obtain them. If women are held back at the lower levels of the profession by a gendered policy that keeps men at the top, it will certainly perpetuate that societal prejudice and profoundly contradict any policies of inclusion. Efforts that are currently made to accommodate women must be replaced by efforts to integrate them and that must, of necessity, involve restructuring the system. This lawyer continues his assertion:

"A woman could be a good advocate, but a man will want to work with another man in a criminal case. He probably has much greater confidence perhaps in talking to a man, in criminal activity. In any event, more criminal activities are done by men so it's only natural that most men will go to a man in something like that."

Another lawyer pointed to societal prejudice as a barrier for women:

"Even though there is a larger number of females practising in the courts, it does not seem to be as attractive a prospect for a lot of women, as it is for men. I suppose that is changing now, but in addition to that, there are a lot of people who would not go to female lawyers to do matters in court. There is still a lot of prejudice. There are a lot of women who won't go to female lawyers to do a divorce, 'cause they feel that there is always the threat of gossip and that kind of thing. So there will still be a role for men. And I don't think that the fact that women come into the profession will make it a female domain almost exclusively because I think you will always find males at the top of the legal profession. I don't say that to be chauvinist because of gender bias. It is the kind of profession that perhaps creates that. Just like politics."

This maleness of the professions is perhaps a large part of the problem for women who go into traditionally male-defined professions. And the male preference goes much beyond the sex of the perpetrators of crimes. It has been shown that in medicine women doctors are still addressed as nurse and men are perceived and assumed to be doctors. Why does the male preference go beyond the sex of the perpetrators? For the simple reason that some women still seek out male doctors even in the case of gynaecology and obstetrics -- two highly female aspects of medicine. Do women prefer to go females in this field because they have more to do with women? On the contrary. Having had little or no choice previously, there is still a small number of women in these fields compared to men. It is therefore only recently that one had any choice at all. And the same goes for lawyers.

The insights of these two lawyers quoted above are indicated in their positions. One is a well respected and seasoned lawyer who has his own chambers. The other, much younger, has asserted himself in the profession by establishing his own chambers, even before he had become well known. Given their arguments, women would be reluctant to establish chambers because of the risks and the prevalence of sex

discrimination in the profession.

Another male lawyer introduces another concept to the gender debate:

"The practise of law has its peculiarities and I'm going to introduce something quite different. There is still a predominance of certain types of legal work particularly in the higher economic bracket in the hands of white lawyers, o.k.? They don't get involved in criminal work. So the suggestion that male lawyers are the better lawyers in criminal court as an example is not necessarily accurate, because the predominance of work ... the higher economic quality work in the hands of white fellows is not to suggest that they are better lawyers. It is just the way the cookie has crumbled and the way the work is distributed. Nor it is not to say that a female lawyer could not go into a criminal court and defend any criminal as efficiently and as competently as any other male lawyer. So it doesn't follow to my mind, that because male lawyers dominate in the criminal court, that one would necessarily think that female lawyers will not get work in that area."

Clearly, this introduces a racial dichotomy into the profession and one which suggests that the women's emergence as successful lawyers seems even more difficult than initially intimated. For instance, if a large percentage of legal business is reserved for a particular racial group, then the struggle for a share of the rest of the legal business from the dominant group is made that more difficult to acquire. Therefore, if the opportunity to reach success is reduced, then it must take longer to achieve that success.

Where men introduced a racial component in analyzing various dichotomies in the profession, women spoke of class, racial and gender components as one woman lawyer in the commercial sector states: "a white female lawyer is part of the white legal establishment. A white lawyer, male or female, it doesn't matter, they have no problems. They have tons of black work and the white work, both. And white work is not too clean". She also alluded to the social status of some colleagues and the role which economic status plays. In terms of class, she states:

"Then there is the attorney syndrome ... like she's somebody's daughter. There are people who repeat my name and say 'what a strange name!' What they really want to say is, who are you exactly? Who is your father."

One's family connections can in fact make life a bit less difficult, not necessarily through requesting special favours, but by being favoured even if only because of the familiarity of one's name. A woman whose father is a well-known criminal lawyer reacts to this assertion: "I do not lie that I may have gotten things a little easier coming from a legal family and therefore that name has recognition in the public's mind. But by the same token, if I didn't go in court, I would not have been able to propel it. Or if I did not do what people wanted me to do or deliver what people asked me to deliver, they may not come back to me." In admitting that her family name may have benefits for her, she contends that she does indeed have to do a good job in order to attract and retain her clients. But the name and father's legal success will perhaps make things easier for her.

Men have introduced two factors to explain the situation of women lawyers. How do women perceive the situation and do they articulate it as is seen through the eyes of their male colleagues? Women are noticeably absent in criminal court. Men have stated that since the majority of crimes are committed by men, they would naturally seek the services of male lawyers, and that women do not like criminal court. What do women say? A woman in private practice and criminal court, states:

"You still have to like the court room because the court room can be a very intimidating experience even for lawyers. And I believe that once you know the laws, and once you stick to the ethics of the profession and you are basically respectful and you don't put up with no nonsense, you're able to do it. But a lot of people are intimidated by the judge and the magistrate straight away. I am not averse to having a run-in with them if that's what it comes to, but by the same token, I won't necessarily

describe myself as a trouble-maker either. I like criminal law. It's not the only thing I like in law but I just like it. I get a charge."

And why is she not intimidated by criminal court? She governs herself by a very useful philosophy which makes it easy to understand her approach to the practice.

"Criminal [law] is not about winning every case. Criminal law is about defending your client to the best of your ability according to the defence that is there. And you are as much an officer of the court as is the prosecutor. Unfortunately too, I think through the media, through television programs, whatever, there exists a glorified image of the lawyer who wins every case and who does extremely well. Of course, but that is more to me an ego trip than necessarily what the profession entails. You are an officer of the court. A person comes to you in the same way that a person goes to the prosecution and complains. You have a duty to carry out, and you are to carry out that duty to the best of your ability according to your instructions. And I think a lot of people find it difficult to accept that there are a lot of times when you may lose cases. There are a lot of times when you don't lose cases too. But you've got to be able to accept both. Plus the art of cross-examination, I think this is the other difficult thing."

She contends that success in criminal court is contingent upon one's years' of experience at criminal law, but that the inexperienced criminal lawyer is often exploited:

"criminal law is something that the longer you're in it, the better you get at it. And therefore the early days are always the hardest. The judge or the magistrate is going to take advantage of you, the prosecutor is going to take advantage of you, and the witness is going to take advantage of you. And if you don't know how to cross-examine properly, they will doubly take advantage of you. And a lot of people therefore seem very intimidated by that whole experience. And there are rough times for everybody and it's a learning experience. I would hate to think that after five years or three years of cross-examining in court, I am still at the same standard as I was when I started. So that when you look back at it, you realize how green you were in the first year and then you realize, well you get slightly ripier or browner in the second year. I have been here now not quite three years and I feel comfortable in court, but it has taken me the better part of three years to reach here. And therefore it is a continuing process of development. I think a lot of people shy away from it because of those difficulties in those early days."



This hardly sounds like a woman who is intimidated by criminal court or in criminal court. And she seems to be a very dynamic and confident lawyer who sets her own agenda and pays no attention to stereotypes or to glass ceilings, and certainly has no intention of imposing a self-styled ceiling on herself. Another woman in criminal law gives her perspective of women who go into family law:

"I think a lot of women are happy there. I don't know if they want to do criminal law. They tell you that criminal law is messy and they don't want to get up and have run-in quarrels ... which is really what criminal law is. You are on your feet quarrelling with police and prosecutors and magistrates and judges. There are some men who don't even like doing that, you know. It takes a particular sort of personality. So it may have to do with that. A lot of women, I think, end up doing family law and the "non-aggressive" areas of law because they are perceived as not being able to handle the other things."

Explaining further that even if you are good, there is still the gender component that works against the female lawyer, this woman contends that male and female lawyers are viewed differently within the profession:

"Even if you are a very good lawyer on your feet, I mean I have done things in court that people have come and thanked me and said 'that was fantastic, *but you would have still done better if you were a man*'. I have gone away getting everything that I have wanted for my client. I have walked out of court laughing, and yet, people feel that somehow, *a man could have done it better*. I have had people come in with rape cases, and they are embarrassed to discuss the details with women, much more so than they would with a man. So that you really have to put them at ease. And that is a very difficult barrier to cross. I have had people look at me and say to me '*I would prefer to see a man*' or '*I want to see the lawyer*'. As if you can't be a lawyer. You must be a secretary or something."

This mistaken professional identity is reflective of systemic gender biases and is similar to the situation doctors experienced with their patients who routinely referred to them as nurses. So too, the female lawyer has been mistaken for someone other than the lawyer,

perhaps a secretary. *'You would have still done better if you were a man'*. In other words, a woman in a previously defined male profession, will never be perceived as excellent because they will have to be male to be better than they are. Put differently, she cannot compete with a man in the profession; she cannot be seen as equal because of her handicap -- she is a woman. How does this woman react to the assertion that because "most crimes are committed by men" they prefer men to defend them in criminal court? She states defiantly:

"If I have a rape case to do, I don't get concerned with issues of morality and rightness and wrongness and the poor woman 'you ain't have no right standing up in court for that man'. That kind of thing does not enter my mind at all. It is just another job that I'm doing, and I'm doing it to the best of my ability. And if she has been raped I'm terribly sorry but I'm supposed to work for my client. And I think that all of us (3 criminal lawyers) have that, that we are able to detach ourselves emotionally. Whereas I see a lot of other female attorneys wanting to involve themselves in rightness and wrongness. Things that I don't think should come into play. Or if you really want to do your job effectively in my view, they shouldn't factor in at all."

This attitude towards the "issues of morality and rightness and wrongness" is one that would be highly offensive to women in general and to feminists in particular, even though this woman sees herself as performing the job she has been hired to do. Women generally condemn other women who represent a man in a rape case but this woman detaches herself on that level and deals with it objectively and refuses to become emotionally involved.

Career aspirations for women in the profession take various forms. However, it is quite evident that women's experience is quite different from men's primarily because they have the disadvantage of operating in a system in which the woman is still alien.

The system has clearly been designed by men, for men, and in spite of the inclusion of women in recent years, women are held back on the periphery. They are not perceived in the same manner as men, nor are they perceived, as women, as being capable of doing as well as the men. They have difficulty even if they have proven themselves to be excellent in court because male dominance still pervades the system and impedes women's progress in various ways. But still, they progress.

Career aspirations for women and men are shaped differently and men seem to have the advantage over women since performance and success are measured in male terms. The access accorded women in recent years marks only the beginning of the difficult task women have in trying to convince society that excellence in the profession is gender blind.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Perhaps one may expect that given the distinctions made between male and female lawyers, the difference in experience, and the obvious male dominance at most levels, women may want to recoil and perhaps transfer out of the profession or not go into it at all. Instead, women have opted for other choices, they have confronted these challenges and have asserted themselves in the profession. And although many of them have not ventured into criminal law with equal enthusiasm, those who have chosen it as a specialty, are emerging quite dynamic and competent in that area. Women seem to have carefully examined the structure of the profession and the way in which it operates in terms of the distribution of work and the various pockets of dominance that exist. Rather

than trying to knock these structures down to make their own mark, they seem to have designed for themselves paths for success as defined by themselves and not necessarily in harmony with those established by their male peers. Consequently they seem opposed to competing in a contest whose rules have been designed by men, and whose outcome is determined by men, since their success in such a contest will be measured by that of the dominant group, against whom there seem to be no odds.

Women are working around these male symbols and structures establishing niches of their own, and expanding in new areas where men have not yet penetrated. At the same time, they work alongside men in their male enclaves, gaining experience, making their presence felt, and their competence known. Do women enjoy their work given these circumstances? Are the men happy in this struggle to retain their dominance? Women and men speak to these questions quite differently, as job satisfaction for the two groups comes in different forms, at different levels and in different measurements. Indeed it is not unusual for lawyers to have a second career or occupation, particularly those who work in private practice. The most popular of these careers is politics.

Men move between politics and law with a flair and flexibility that seems to elude the majority of women lawyers. The synonymous relationship that seems to exist between law and politics is perhaps responsible for this barrier. But there is an increasing political involvement of the new generation of female lawyers, having as a role model the only female cabinet minister who also demonstrates the same flair and flexibility, and success as the men. Five of the 10 women indicated a second occupational activity and two had more than one additional interest. Six listed politics as their main activity. One woman

was in commerce, and in stark contrast to the average lawyer, male or female, one was a sports commentator. Six of the men were heavily involved in politics, three were currently active, and one was very involved in trade unionism. Therefore, job satisfaction takes on different dimensions based on these secondary activities. The magistrate, whose position was previously held by a male, says:

"I like what I do, and I get satisfaction out of doing it. And I always feel if you're doing a job, you must get some sort of satisfaction out of it. There will be days when you will be very upset about it, and you say 'well why did I do this, why did I choose this job?' But generally speaking, if you get satisfaction, you should stay in the job. But I get satisfaction out of the job I do, and when I was in the chambers, I liked what I was doing, which was civil law, contracts ... in the Attorney General's Chambers. I liked coming to court and doing court matters. I enjoyed it. So like that I was doing civil law, that is what I was exposed to first, so I suppose that's why I like it."

Generalizing about women, she felt that domestic responsibilities intercepted their job satisfaction and explains why:

"I suppose women are satisfied to some extent, but I think that some times we have a little problem juggling careers and family, if you have a family. It depends on the kind of job you're in. It can cut into your time, and if you happen to be married, it creates another problem because men can sometimes be very intolerant. It's alright if he has to come home late because he's working on something, but if you have to come home late because you're working on something, he's not concerned about that, *he wants his dinner*. So it creates some dissatisfaction."

A thirty-year old woman who does criminal cases, talks about her experience:

"Law is very important to me. I like it o.k.? I love my work. I intend that ten years from now, when people are mentioning the good attorneys in Barbados, people will call my name and forget that I have breasts and bottom, and they will not think of my sexuality. They will think of me as just being a good lawyer. That requires a certain amount of dedication to make sure I'm doing a certain quality work. Thankfully, my husband understands this. At the moment we don't have any children and I hope

that we don't have to worry about children for a long time. But not ten years. I won't want to start having a child at 40 at all."

Not only do women have to struggle with adjusting the mind of the male from their sexuality to their professionalism, they have to cope with another common conflict. This is an appeal to forget about her anatomy and her sexuality and to judge her purely on the basis of her work, so that she may be mentioned among the good attorneys. Do men have corresponding concerns? No, they are perceived first as lawyers. According to some women, men allow sex and sexuality to intercept and supersede a serious discussion of a legal matter which a woman may be having with them. Women are therefore fighting two battles simultaneously in the profession. They are fighting to move from its periphery to its core through excellent work and they are fighting to be accepted on the basis of their professionalism and not on their sexuality.

Women also have to cope with other stresses. This woman gives a profound analysis of other stresses of the profession that can militate against job satisfaction, but which no one else has even mentioned:

"I think a lot of women maybe dissatisfied with their income earning power, or the fact that as women, they cannot earn as much money as the men even though they may have the same ability."

*As women, they cannot earn as much money as the men, even though they have the same ability.* Identified as a source of job dissatisfaction, this wage differential can perhaps be dealt with, but this woman points to aspects of stress that make the job more difficult. Job expectations are not always synchronized with outcomes and often one questions whether one had made the right decision. And even when one has the benefit of a guidance counsellor, this uncertainty still lingers but this perhaps has much to do with

many of the little things that do not even arise in such discussions. This woman nevertheless explains how the practice of law itself can militate against job satisfaction. She contends that "the job itself comes with a lot of stress because you are working with deadlines, you can be sued if you don't do your work properly". And she states:

"So it is stressful and nobody tells you about that part. Nobody tells you about the competition out there that you have to face. Or that you have difficulty collecting fees from clients. Because if you complete their work before they finish paying, once they get whatever is done, sometimes, they just don't bother about you any more. And again if you don't win, they are so vexed that they have lost, they don't want to pay. You aren't told about the difficulty you have collecting fees. You aren't told about how very expensive it is to run a law practice. And then you come here and you are looking for all this glamour and newspaper publicity and lots of money, and you get struck by the other things. So I think that is where the element of lack of job satisfaction comes in more so now than the gender thing."

*So it is stressful and nobody tells you about that part.* One tends to see only the "glamour" and perhaps to the outsider, all aspects are glamorous. But if the stresses identified here are common to men and women, there are even more stress areas that are common only to women. Areas such as sexual harassment, the male network that functions against women, and the maleness of the profession, such as addressing a group and ignoring the presence of women. So women have a much heavier load to carry.

What is the experience of the veteran female lawyer/politician?

"I came back here in 1968, a few days before Christmas, and I started practising the first Monday morning in 1969. And I had eight years in private practice. In those years, *I was the only woman at the private bar.* And you know, no special allowances were made, I just found my own way, made my own niche in the end. I decided earlier on that I didn't like criminal work and then made my own niche in civil law and in those days, one was in one's 20s, you could do any and everything, you know! I was doing four and five different things at the same time."

Did she feel discouraged or lonely among these men? And was she ever intimidated by their commanding presence? She explains:

"... I had to beat a little lonely pathway but it was good in its way because I was able to be my own authority in my own way. Like what one should wear for practice...I did a lot of work at the Bar. I was secretary-treasurer of the bar association for seven years, especially in those days when you pleased the professions. So the profession was such that I was able to contribute so I would like to think I've done my share for the profession. The profession has served me well, and I would like to think I have given back something to it.

Having *'to beat a little lonely pathway'* is a common experience of women pioneers in many professions and those who have reached top positions. It is generally described as *lonely* because they are the first and only women in those positions; and that unique situation is hammered home to them in ways that can be disconcerting and isolating. She gives an excellent example:

"No allowances were made for me. I never got the feeling that I was overly treated as one of the chaps. Meetings would begin and the chair would say 'fellows, gentlemen ...' it still happens. I don't take umbrage, I don't notice it very much. I don't think it's all that important."

*"Fellows, gentlemen"* used as a greeting to a group which includes even one woman suggests that she must either feel like one of the men, or she must recognize she is not accepted and does not belong even though she held the serving position of secretary-treasurer for seven years. And as she stated earlier, that was a time when one *pleased* the professions. Ignoring this male greeting of exclusion is her strategy of coping with it and its implicit message, but it also serves to reinforce the position of male power.

A veteran lawyer in the profession for at least four decades talks about his job satisfaction and his role in the newspaper business:



"I like the legal profession. I've enjoyed my time in it and I've also played the journalist from time to time. I was, for several years, the chief legal writer of the Advocate [Newspaper] from 1954 to 1962. I think what the law does for you, it gives you an opportunity to take an interest in all sorts of other things."

This man also talks about the changes which the profession has undergone over the years:

"When I first started to practise in Barbados in 1948, there were seven or eight high courts. Today there's only one supreme court which has an original jurisdiction and appellate jurisdiction. There was *no practising lady lawyer at all*. Then the Legal Profession Act came into force in 1973, which deals with the fusion of the profession, the abolition of the distinction between barristers and solicitors, so that we all became attorneys-at-law, and entitled to do everything. I have never myself done what I regard as solicitor's work, which is conveyancing. Not because I can't, I just don't like it."

*"There was no practising lady lawyer at all"*. This again points to the maleness of the profession and the condescension implied when their presence is recognized. Can one imagine him saying there were all "gentleman lawyers"? Men are referred to only as lawyers but for women, they are given the obsequious title of "lady lawyer". And this "lady" title continues no matter how high these women climb. The man continues: "There are very good competent *lawyers who are ladies* and some of the best magistrates are *ladies*. They work harder, longer hours, many of the men [gentlemen] are lazy, don't do the work. I say these things even publicly and get myself in trouble for them, but it's true". The distinction made in discussing women and men in the profession carries a cryptic gender bias that projects women either as intruders or outsiders. And one needs only to look again at these last three quotes to better understand how invisible women are in the profession and how male the profession really is. And it is this "lady" distinction that perhaps allows men to think in terms of women's sexuality when

discussing legal issues with them. If these distinctions are removed and men and women are seen and treated as lawyers then women would have more of a fighting chance purely on the basis of their expertise in the profession.

A man in private practice for at least 15 years described job satisfaction in similar terms pointing to the aspects of the job that have nothing to do with law. These he identifies as preparation of proper and "incontestable documentation" and obtaining documents assessed for land development duty. He clarifies:

"So a person may get disgusted with those sorts of things, but you can get some satisfaction from the fact that *that* document that you just produced is incontestable. There are things like that which give you job satisfaction. I get satisfaction that a lawyer writes to me about a difficulty that he is accusing your client of having been guilty of, and you do a letter by way of response which shows him what the real facts are, o.k.?' And you read that letter three times in draft form and you keep improving on it, and you send off that letter, and you can't wait for a reply to come, because as far as you are concerned, this fellow does not have a response. And when he meets you and tells you 'man, I didn't know those facts', or 'you realize that I accept that you really sent a beautiful letter'. That is another form of satisfaction."

Obviously, these are revelations of the profession for both women and men, and one wonders if these experiences are the same for the two groups. But given the fact that women are newcomers one assumes that this experience is more frequent for men. Recognizing therefore, the income differential for women and men and the skewed distribution of work that favours men, whether black or white, women experience a higher level of job dissatisfaction because of the maleness of the profession and the fact that their goals and success are often measured by society in the same context as the males'. The maleness of the profession is further articulated by this respondent as he persistently expresses his ideas in terms of the masculine gender.

One man who is relatively new in the profession after 20 years in his first career, bluntly states his views: "Let me tell you about law. Law has money in it. But in terms of intellectual fulfilment, in terms of satisfaction, the job is still stressful, and very rarely does the average lawyer see himself as feeling psychologically rewarded for what he has done. He sees his reward in terms of the wealth that law can produce for him." In terms of intrinsic rewards, another man gives a similar analysis:

"In the law that I have done at least so far, there hasn't really been much intellectual stimulation. It is often that the judge accepts your argument as true and there isn't much you can do to persuade him other than what the evidence that was given by the character who you put on the witness stand. Because the law is fairly rigid in a lot of things. So there is no new thinking. There is some new thinking but very little that affects the decision of a judge in this day and age, other than that he might have a particular slant ... which is sort of personal. Other than that, there isn't much to stimulate you along the way. I see it as a bridge."

To some extent, this emphasizes some of the stresses articulated earlier by the 30-year old female lawyer/politician, but what is noticeably different is the way in which gender is treated. The woman, states it's not a 'gender thing' referring to job satisfaction. Instead she cites stress which the profession involves for both women and men. Contrastingly, this man seems to be subconsciously implying that the profession is (still) a "male" domain as he persistently refers to the lawyer as a man. On the other hand, the woman rejects the issue of gender and gives a much broader analysis of job satisfaction.

### **Family Life**

The conflict for women between developing their profession and having a family, puts them at a disadvantage and often forces them to postpone having children for some

time. But because they are the primary care-givers, when they do have their children, it often has an enormous impact on their lifestyle and on their profession and calls for major adjustments.

Characteristics of the sample speak for themselves to some extent where family life is concerned. And based on these statistics, it is implied that there is differential effect of family life on men and women in the legal profession. One female lawyer completing her first year in private practice, speaks to the question on family life and her own expectations:

"Even if I got married, I won't start planning kids before my practice can afford it because I have to be able to spend time with my kids. My practice has to be able to handle it. And if I go off, it will affect people who depend on me -- my secretary, my clerk, those kinds of things. I will structure it so that yes, I might be able to have a husband soon even though I'm young in practice, but I couldn't have kids now, no way, because my practice can't afford it. I'm not in a position where I can go away for two, three or four months."

Another lawyer with a young practice as well, brings a different approach to family:

"I just got married and having a child is not a priority with me and then my personality is such that I would be pregnant and go to court and I won't care about what anybody says. I would get up and keep 'nough noise and carry on, because I don't think that pregnancy is a disease. But by and large, a large percentage of the others are into relationships and have decided that 'my family is more important'. So they opt to try and maintain that role and keep the practice going and to do those things that are less physically demanding."

The strategies developed to cope with merging family life and career seem to indicate that both jobs cannot be performed to their maximum. And like the doctors, female lawyers seem to move into those areas that are less time-consuming (like family law and conveyancing) and are not as physically demanding as criminal law. This self-styled

ceiling is imposed by these women in order to reach a medium where they can enjoy a family and have a career, simultaneously. Women indicate that childrearing and family life have enormous impact on their career, particularly because demands of the legal profession can take a work-day late into the night. She continues:

"Law is very demanding. It is now 5:15 o.k., well it's vacation, but I don't have any children to pick up from school. However, you will find that those female attorneys who have families are now hustling to pack up and rush home to be with the kids, because the helper is leaving. Or they have to get the kids from nursery, or by now, they would have had to pick up the kids from school. And this job falls to the mother, and as a wife and mother, you are expected. My husband can cook, but he has his moments when he will just sit down and wait until I come home. The air [in his stomach] would be killing him, and he would still be waiting until I get home to cook. And if you have children you have to be cognizant of those responsibilities."

*Rushing home to be with the kids and having to rush to pick up the kids from school are jobs that falls to the mother.* For the career mother, struggling to juggle the two jobs becomes a job in itself and it is not only the physical aspects of the job that make it a struggle. It becomes a psychological struggle because the dynamics of the two jobs are often and perhaps always worked out mentally before they become a physical struggle at which point it interacts with the mental aspects and become psychologically stressful. *This job falls to the mother ... you are expected.* But no one says whose expectation it is. And it seems to go way beyond the husband's. The statements seem to imply that all of society expects this, not from a particular woman as an individual, but from any woman in that situation. What is even more profound, is that the women interviewed seemed to feel compelled to respond to this expectation positively. Not that their husbands have said that they have to, but it appears to be an expectation to which women

as a group readily respond. She continues:

"I have worked here, gone home like at 7:00, "lime" with him for a while, come back here at 8:30 and left at 5:00 the next morning. On Saturdays, you have your wash day ... you may choose Saturdays to go to the hairdresser, or spend the day with the kids, take them to the dentist. You can't be in your office catching up on things that need to be done."

The husband referred to here, is the one, who would sit at home and wait for his wife to arrive to make his dinner. What appears to be the fundamental problem here is that women do not seem to include the husband in dealing with these responsibilities. The structure has always excluded them in much the same way that the structure of the professions excluded the women. No women have indicated that they have worked out a plan with their husbands and it has failed or has not. They all speak about their role, their responsibilities and how they cope and the fact that the men don't help. Perhaps the men feel excluded. Another senior female lawyer offers another perspective:

"A lot of women have to accommodate the raising of a family, riding in tandem with practising a profession or pursuing a career in a way that men don't. Sure men are parts of those families too, but the donkey work on the ground, traditionally men don't do it. And a lot of women, including myself, I don't see why men should be made to do it, if they don't want to ... not nowadays. We employ machines to do it, or you pay somebody to do it. What I don't wish to do, I pay somebody to do. Just as there are a lot of things that people don't do, they are prepared to pay me to do. I don't let it be an obstacle."

What is being offered here is another coping strategy. Technologies have been developed to eliminate or reduce aspects of housework and services are marketed to shift the burden but the fundamental problem is not addressed. The problem is that housework is perceived to be the responsibility of women. Coping mechanisms leave the real problem intact. If the technology is taken away or fails to function, if funds are not available to

pay for these domestic services, the responsibility is again shifted back to the woman.

And that is the real issue. This woman continues:

"More and more women are paying nursery schools to look after their infant children while they are at work. They are paying maids to clean their houses, they are paying laundries to do the washing, they are paying a gardener to do what they normally would do in the garden. They are using new technology. The drudgery of housework is nothing now. I vacuumed my bedroom this morning, it took two minutes. It's not a big thing. I do my own housework. As busy as I am, I get it done and I don't go on and on about it. I don't let it stop me from doing what I want to do. And the day that I can't do it, I'll pay somebody else to do it."

Paying nursery schools to look after their infant children, paying maids to clean, paying laundries to do the washing, paying a gardener. Yes, these are all aspects of childrearing and domestic work. This, in itself, is creating a new industry of its own which now attaches a price tag to the housework that has little value when resident women preform these same jobs. What is clear here is that this woman's statements are no more true for the single mother/woman than they are for the married mother/woman. They are all assumed and articulated as responsibilities of women, which are being carried out to a large degree by new technologies. As articulated above, they seem not to concern men at all, at least not even in the eyes of women. And to take it a bit farther, career women in particular, are willing to employ other women to do these chores. Is this because men can't do them or because these chores are deemed to be performed by women? So the manner of coping with the situation at hand, becomes a profound reinforcing mechanism for perpetuating the role as a female one.

How do men respond to this situation of women? Are they conscious of the dilemma women are in? And what effort do they make to share in these taxing

responsibilities?

The lawyer/member of parliament gives a very clear explanation of his role and the effect of family on the professional man:

"The traditional role of the man, the profession will pose no problem for it. I mean if you asked my wife tomorrow she would say 'well, for what he has to do at home, he could fly to the moon once a week if he wants to'. She'd say so. I'm sure she'd say 'he doesn't change diapers. If something is to be done I have to do it unless I say to him', and she did last night when she wanted me to bathe our daughter. And that's the traditional role. I suppose, that men tend to have more freedom from actually rearing children. It is so in the western world generally, I think, but in the Caribbean, it's even more pronounced. So yes, it does pose greater difficulty for women than men."

The traditional role of the man remains very traditional in a rapidly changing and more modern society, in a way that leads to much conflict and uncertainty. Similarly, the traditional role of the woman [that of homemaker] has expanded to take on as well, family provider and this role she is asked to carry out in a society that is highly structured in accordance with the traditional male role (that of provider/breadwinner). And although the society has become more modern, it is not the kind of modernism that recognizes or responds to the fact that there are now two people winning the bread. And this denial leads to much stress that will perhaps eventually lead to a profound redefinition of the family and a change in its very structure. In more general terms, this lawyer points to a changing role of the man in the family which doesn't necessarily affect the role of the woman. He explains:

"I think men are playing more of a role in the family but I don't think that the role they are playing is as great or will ever be as great as the role of the woman. And therefore, you see, as the men play more of a role, they are playing a role in the context of a redefinition of what family life is. Which redefinition has added responsibility [for the man]? It's not the



same kind of family life you had years ago. Whereas years ago, the nuclear family was complemented by all the extensions ... grandmothers and so on ... the role of the father was different. O.k., well you redefine that and the family is recreated or reordered and the role that the father takes on are not roles the mother once had, but in fact, the roles that other people were performing anyway. So it doesn't reduce her responsibilities. It doesn't when you think about it. It really doesn't because I don't think that men are doing things that the wife would normally do anyway."

The role that men are playing is not '*as great or will ever be as great as the role of the woman*'. Difficult to challenge, this statement helps to substantiate the argument that where the woman has retained her traditional role, and the man has acquired roles that persons other than the wife/mother performed, she has also inherited some of the roles of the extended family members, such as picking up the children after school; and roles of the father, such as supervising the homework and disciplining the children. So indeed, she has not only retained her role. Her role has been redefined to encompass much more.

A more experienced lawyer in the traditional tone explains why his career has not affected his family life: "I can't say it has affected my family life. My wife trained as a nurse but she doesn't really practise as such, because she got *hitched* onto me after she qualified and I have been successful enough that *she doesn't have to work*." Clearly, family life did not affect his career but it certainly terminated hers. And he substantiates the fact that housework, when performed by the wife/spouse, is not considered work, even though a fee is paid for its performance when it is executed by an outsider or helper. Perhaps what this man really means is that his wife only has one job that of homemaker. Another man gives a different view:

"Indeed more is expected of a woman at a certain stage of her career development, and I don't know what it is but at a time they don't aspire to go much farther or whatever, and they may just taper off, just at the

point where they would be expected to excel. Because they are still thinking of a family, especially if they have young kids and so, they can't go that far without really considering them. Even if you are a manager and they decide to send you overseas, she isn't going to work for her husband. Whereas the husband would feel he's the family man, and he'd work. Society doesn't expect a woman to do that. And I think that is a serious inhibiting factor."

*"They can't go that far without really considering them [children]."* A common situation of career women with children, and one that career men do not normally experience. It creates a very difficult problem for women in trying to achieve their career goals. Men do understand this disadvantage of career women with children and some recognize the difficulty. It is the structure of society which imposes such heavy fines on these women.

A man talks about the female disadvantage:

"because of the way Barbadian families are still structured, where the wife, even though she has a profession, is still expected to be homemaker, and I have actual experiences of female lawyers, especially at the outset of their practice or their entry into their profession say 'gosh, I can't cope with this, how does one cope?'."

But he admits that family life does not affect men in nearly the same way: "I know a female lawyer who had practised for about five or six years, and had decided she couldn't cope with it and went into a large private corporation. But there are others who do not change their profession that easily, to accommodate a family. And as a matter of fact, it is often said that career women are largely responsible for the break-up of a marriage because of their absence from the home. This man, citing a woman whom he knows to be well grounded in family law, and on whom judges often rely for her presentations and often quotes, he states:

"It basically could be that men are not accepting that women are as capable and with some minor prejudice, they will still send it [work] to

another male lawyer. But that woman has gone through a divorce because she took on a different stance. Her children grew extremely close to their father. She had an approach like a male approach: she spent long hours on her practice; developed a successful practice; but her family life suffered because the Barbadian household is still structured around the woman being in the house."

**"She had ... a male approach".** This approach involved spending long hours on her practice in order to make it a successful practice, so says this man. But then, this implies that women will not be able to compete successfully since their success is evaluated on the basis of a man's and the chances for the woman with children are jeopardized due in part to the long hours required for the practice and women are defining their success differently. But in this man's personal situation, family life was dealt with in the traditional manner:

"It doesn't affect me as an individual because *my wife and I agreed that she's not working*, and she will look after the household. There was an economic influence in that too. Economics attached to the influence, and therefore, we structured it that way, so that it frees me up not to have to be running behind the children to take them to lessons or get them to guides or brownies or whatever."

The woman's career is terminated and she fully becomes a dependent on her husband in as much the same way that his children are dependent on him. *"My wife and I agreed that she's not working, and she will look after the household"*. This does appear contradictory in that she needed to work before she had her children and then with two dependents, she agreed not to work, becoming a dependent herself. A decision that seems to transfer an enormous amount of power to the husband, raising his social status as he becomes the sole provider for three other people besides himself and at the same time, relieves her of much of her independence and draws a great social distinction between

her and her professional husband. She is therefore transformed from being an independent self-asserting, and career-minded individual, into a dependent housewife. Perhaps too, this man is acknowledging that raising a family is indeed a demanding job and that perhaps it is easier for him to concentrate on one job while his wife concentrates on one (raising the family) from which he agrees to withdraw.

### **Upward Mobility**

Upward mobility in the legal profession is a challenge and is dependent on a certain pattern of career development of the individual. After having qualified in the profession, one can choose to go into private practice, or become a civil servant by working in the Ministry of Legal Affairs. Or of late, one can affiliate one's self with a private corporation in a legal capacity. If one chooses the ministry, then there is a further choice. These chambers are divided into three tracks, the Attorney General's office, and the Solicitor General's office which are responsible for drafting and implementing laws, respectively, and the office of public prosecution. Despite women's recent entry into the profession, they have made noticeable progress in all three areas, as the following table indicates. And in addition to this, 45% of the court officers are women.

**Table 18**  
**Distribution of Lawyers in the**  
**Ministry of Legal Affairs by Location, by sex, 1993**

Location	Male	Female	Total
Attor.G.Chambers	4	3	7
Solicitor Gen. Office	10	5	15
Public Prosecutions	6	2	8
Court Officers	12	10	22
Totals	32	20	52

Source: Statistics received from the Ministry of Legal Affairs, 1993.

A female magistrate gives a brief summary of the Attorney General's Chambers and the pattern of movement through the various levels:

"In the Attorney General's chambers, this is the legal department, people never hear very much about this. They hear about the attorney general. The Attorney General's Chambers is made up exclusively of legal services, or what is called career lawyers and you start out at what I would call crown counsel. Then you have senior crown counsel. Then you have principal crown. Then there is deputy solicitor general, and then you become solicitor general. The solicitor general is the chief legal advisor to the attorney general. And there are various qualifications for it ... you move up based on vacancies that are there. It all depends on where you happen to be at a particular point in time. Because you might come in now and find that the people ahead of you are all young. So unless they go out of the system, you might have a little wait before you move up."

Given the above, it would seem that there exists equality of opportunity for men and women in these chambers but are women taking advantage of these opportunities?

She states:

"I spent about seven years in the Attorney General's Office before I came on the Bench. I came on the Bench in '87 and it wasn't a problem because *if there's a vacancy there and you're next in line, you've got to get the*

*top*. So I won't say that it affected upward mobility because when I joined the chambers there weren't many women and now there are about 50-50 males and females."

If you're next in line, you've got to get the top, indicating that there is gender equality in this ministry. Clearly therefore, women will move up the ladder as men move out, and as they retire. This seems inevitable as there is almost equal representation of men and women in these chambers, but there is often subtle sex discrimination that precludes women from moving to the top in the same manner that men do. There are still no women as heads of departments, and there are still no female judges. One woman lawyer/politician gives her reaction to upward mobility:

"I always heard when I was growing up, a description of the Bar of Barbados which I think is still very much applicable, used by various lawyers to describe the Bar. You have roles at the bottom. A fairly large number who are struggling really just to pay expenses. People can get very unkind and call them "bread and fish" lawyers and that kind of thing, but that gives you an idea what I mean. And all of us are there at some point, because you're starting off. It's a question of how long you remain there. Then you have a humongous middle range ... a lot of them tend to reach there and stay there. And then you have a very select few. Because a lot of people still receive QC for good service, but they are not necessarily perceived in the eyes of the public as constituting that small group and therefore receiving the bulk of the work in the island."

Upward mobility in terms of success in private practice is even more difficult to achieve than upward mobility in the Attorney General's chambers. And it makes for a very pronounced stratified profession where elitism will continue to dominate and make success more difficult for new graduates, particularly women. This woman is referring to the stratification of the legal system as it becomes more accessible to a larger number of people and the elitism that is used to stratify the profession. And as one lawyer indicated earlier, one's family plays an important role in one's success. Given this,

elitism will prevail because the bulk of men and women graduates don't have that recognizable family name.

The lawyer/sports commentator gives her views in terms of whether men and women have equal opportunities. She states:

"Yes and no. I think on paper they do and I would think that all the problems that you are going to find in other professions, you will find in this profession. And I believe as was revealed a little while ago, I think it was perhaps last year ... just last year, the question of sexual harassment and the usual business of how do you get on in a profession now with women? I think that plays a good deal. It plays some part for women in the legal profession today, so that is the problem. I don't think the public knows about it, or would believe that females in the profession would allow it to happen by the very nature of the profession. But unfortunately, sometimes I think it's just the David and Goliath syndrome that some can't do anything about it, and I think you either have to be prepared to go through the long, hard years and wait for your rewards or if you want the more instantaneous things, I suppose sometimes you just have to join the club and do what's on."

Sexual harassment in the profession has been articulated principally by women, and projected as having devastating repercussions on women's careers. Whether one rejects it, or accepts it, it is very prevalent in the profession. Several women have spoken about either their own experience, or the general situation of women in the profession. One woman states her views quite emphatically:

"If I have to do a case with you or against you or whatever, we can do that and I will do it to the best of my ability, and that is that. But we don't have relationships beyond that. And I say it sometimes as it is. Last year a lot of men at the Bar were not speaking to me because I said that a lot of women at the Bar were being sexually exploited by senior male attorneys. Lots of men stopped speaking to me. I was amused by it. But I was also heartened by the number of females who came to me and said 'I was so glad that somebody finally spoke up'."

To speak up on an issue of this magnitude is often a challenge for some women and

sometimes they fear the repercussions of a formal complaint but women do speak up. *I was so glad somebody finally spoke up*, would seem to imply women wanted it made known but were afraid to make an official complaint. Another woman who now works for a private organization talks about sexual harassment and the role it played in her leaving private practice:

"A lot of people don't recognize sexual harassment for what it is. A lot of people use it as a bargaining instrument, so I mean it's all for your own ends to take the share. You can take sexual harassment and basically it will ensure your success to some extent, until he decides to find another person. I mean, there it is. They do it. I don't think any one, I mean nobody in the legal profession can deny it. And anybody who denies it is being wilfully dishonest. I know some of them. I suppose what has happened too is that although it's in the wider society, it seems to be the same core of people doing it."

Is this specific to the legal profession given that it's a relatively closed profession? This woman indicates that it has more to do with the nature of the profession and the distribution of work, which can eventually propel upward mobility. She further states:

"There are some attorneys you will talk to, it wouldn't cross their minds ever, to make improper suggestions to female attorneys. It just would not cross their minds. But there are others who would do it and can't see there's anything wrong with it, because to their minds, they are not harassing people, in fact, they are complimenting you or just showing a normal interest. But then there are others who go out of their way to destroy your reputation. That's the only thing I can call it. I mean I know there are attorneys who go around telling other attorneys that they slept with a particular attorney, point blank. They have said it, and they didn't. They tried to, but they didn't."

This puts women at a major disadvantage in the profession not only because it is not a custom of the female species to sexually harass males but because it is often difficult for women to convince anyone that the most chronologically and professionally senior men in the profession have been sexually harassing young women. It may also be



difficult to have these men disciplined for their behaviour. It is a paradox that women for a long time have tried to gain access to the professions and now they have access, sexual harassment becomes a deciding factor as to where they can go in these professions. Some women leave the profession as a coping strategy and this woman explains: "I know people who left the profession because of that. In my case it wasn't mainly because of that, but it was a factor in my leaving. It made staying just that less desirable". In the profession, *they see you first as women and then as lawyers*". A common experience of female professionals. Women, regardless of their success and the professionalism they bring to the job, do not receive the same respect they extend to men. The female magistrate speaks of a similar experience:

"I would be on the bench and a lawyer would come in and he would say 'oh ma'am you look very charming today.'" And I would say 'thank you. It's too early to 'mamaguy' me, what is it that you want?' But I think that is something intrinsically male. *They always seem to see you first as a woman, and second as a lawyer.*"

What chances do women have to progress in the profession on fair and even ground?

One female lawyer/politician explains:

"I think that all women who do not have that kind of network, whether it's family connections or a surname that is well-known, are at a disadvantage. But there are a lot of women out there doing good work, that goes unheralded. B.W. is perhaps the greatest example of it. I have tremendous respect for her intellect and her ability, as a lawyer. But there is nobody out there singing her praises. I don't know if there is much you can do about it, unless you want to get up and find your own network and make sure that there are people out there pushing you, and I really don't have time for it."

What is the effect of this on female lawyers as a group?

"It is much more difficult for the woman at the Bar to make it, ultimately. Yes, and in terms of upward mobility, it is a long, slow trudge ... uphill

trudge, for women. For men it is much easier, much, much easier for men than for women. And I find too that senior male attorneys will call men at the Bar and give them work, but they will not do it with a woman. And when they do it with the woman, then they want to pay them very bad fees or don't pay them at all."

Upward mobility becomes an uphill trudge for women. This is a statement which has been reiterated by many women, not only in the legal profession but in the six professions studied. The words used by this woman, seem to put emphasis on the physical demands of the struggle itself. And perhaps the men, aware also of this struggle for women, have engaged in sexual harassment as an incentive for women to make that long, slow, uphill trudge shorter and "less painful", according to the women, and this woman suggests that "I find the younger the women are, the more they are perceived as sexual objects". The very vocal woman on the subject sums it up:

"Women were being exploited in the sense that there are senior attorneys who promise work if you would sleep with them, and promise you trips overseas. And they always want to carry you out and you would be trying to discuss serious legal things with them, and they are talking to you about sex all the time. You know, it really boils down to *'if you give me a piece, you can do very well at the Bar'*."

Sexual harassment by male lawyers as articulated by the women point to a change in the profession that makes one question on what basis are men and women seen as successful? Naturally, these charges of sexual harassment and success based on compliance indicate in a terse manner that women and men in the profession are evaluated on very different criteria. What then is the future for women in the legal profession in Barbados? Women's future seems very bleak for the simple reason that men control the profession - all aspects of it. Women have already admitted to leaving private practice due to sexual harassment, and those who choose to stay may be deprived of a

fair opportunity to excel because they have chosen to remain professional. But like the one above, they are prepared to stay and fight. The treatment to which women are constantly subjected reinforces polarization of the sexes in the profession and seeks to reduce the female from the professional stand on which she was admitted to the Bar, to one of vulnerability and degradation. Equally important is the fact that it solidifies the dominant position of the male.

There is a gender component even in the way upward mobility has been discussed by women and men. Where women see their own upward mobility in terms of their response to sexual harassment and sexual advances by males, men see upward mobility in the system as deriving from experience and ability. But women believe they will be successful because of their ability and their commitment to the profession. This Queen's Counsel states his views:

"Forty years ago, there were no women at the private Bar. Today they are, I would say 50 or 60. Many of them are reasonably successful. They're certainly making a living.... I think they are probably being ethical and obeying the rules of etiquette better than the men. Some of them have taken jobs and as I told you, have become magistrates, and I think very good magistrates. They're certainly doing their work better than the men, and they are working harder. I look forward in the next few years to them becoming high court judges, and more magistrates."

Perhaps it is this competence and commitment that become the source of the sexual harassment directed at women. Perhaps too, it is felt that sexual harassment will reduce women's confidence and eventually lead to their exit from the profession. What about his own progress in the profession?

"There's not much farther for me to go. The only place I can go now is if I became a judge in the court of appeal or something like that, which would be interesting. But it's unlikely I will be appointed."

On the matter of sexual harassment in the profession, he gives a very brief response, verging on denial:

"I think in some quarters there used to be some sort of suspicion of people who had young girls in their chambers were probably sleeping with them. But even that is well off now -- 'JD has two pretty girls in his office, he must be sleeping with them'. He's passing them work and so on, so he must be getting something from them. Even that's phasing out, not only because JD is getting old. I think people are beginning to realize that professional people can work together."

The difficulty women experience in being accepted in private practice on the same terms as men are, seems to indicate that women's success depends to a large extent on the support of men. Women generally have to rely on male mentors in the profession because women are not in sufficient numbers at the high levels to make a difference. But according to the women, the mentors are asking a very high price. Another man further clarifies women's dilemma:

"It is very difficult for a woman to start private practice unless you are known already in some capacity or you are attached to a lawyer in some way that he can send work to you to give you a start, and then based on that start, you can start to bring in your own clients. But to really do it yourself, it will be really difficult. Women are going to find it particularly difficult because it is still a limiting profession and people, when they think of a lawyer are still going to be looking for a man to go to. And if that man sends you to a woman, then you would accept the woman in those circumstances, which is how a lot of women get work."

Women in the profession have three options which they already utilize: the civil service, private practice, and commerce. The civil service becomes the first option for many women, particularly those for whom setting up a private practice is financially challenging. The commercial sector seems to have developed a whole new attitude in terms of legal counsel and legal representation, which has resulted in many corporations having an in-house counsel. In the majority of such cases, women fill the positions.

Another male lawyer speaks from his 15 years' of experience on the difficulty confronting women and the various routes that they have been taking to make it in the legal business:

"There are a lot of female lawyers who have gone far in the judiciary, i.e., they start in the civil service and then you move up the ladder. There are not a lot of female lawyers who have remained in the government service, and the ones who have started out are of a more recent thing, of more recent ilk. So they would now be working themselves up the ladder in the government service. It's going to be a while before they begin to make an impact on the competition for judgeships."

Women seem to be creating their own niche in the commercial sector as in-house counsel, which will eventually reduce some of the workload that is presently passed out to firms. In other words, to offset their struggle in private practice, women have moved into corporations as salaried employees and are beginning to dominate that area of corporate work once sent out to private law firms. So they have circumvented the system to suit their needs in a way that gives them a share of the work without having to submit to sexual harassment. This is the way this man articulates the situation:

"There is a current sway among younger female attorneys to find any job that is going in the private sector and grab it, rather than going through what you can say is the hard days of building up your practice from scratch. There can be tough times for someone who is just starting out, and is trying to build the practice, and a lot of the females would prefer not to have to go through that. Of course, they base it on the attitude of the most senior lawyers who they think, give them a hard time, and some of them are not hard enough, or some of them do not think they can cope with that pressure. Hard times in terms of handling transactions. That is the way they deal with them in transactions or the chauvinistic approach that the male lawyers may display. Or the harassment that some of them complain of getting from male lawyers."

And is this the sexual harassment to which the female lawyers referred? "Yes, couched in whatever clothes that the male lawyers put on it. Those are complaints and concerns."

## **The Structure of the Legal Profession**

The structure of the profession presents two hierarchical dichotomies. On the one hand, it is the dichotomy that emanates from the judiciary, and on the other, it is that which develops out of the private business of the profession. In the first instance, the structure is a more clearly defined one, whereas in the second, it is one created through the perception of society of the profession itself, and the prominence attributed to various areas of specialization, and certainly through the class division of private practice. Men figure prominently in both structures dominating the positions of power and prestige. Women are beginning to climb the ladder and they are making progress. Both men and women have indicated that in view of the increasing number of women being admitted to the Bar annually, they will ultimately be the dominant group in the profession. However, they both see this as a long process. This veteran lawyer and politician explains:

"In this respect, Barbados tends to be behind its neighbours in the Caribbean. It's not only in the judiciary. I mean a little place like Dominica they have had a woman as clerk of parliament. They had a woman who has been speaker of the house. Their prime minister of course, is highly disposed, but a lot of us predated Eugenia Charles as Prime Minister. In places like St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Grenada, women are in many of the top civil service posts, and Barbados is still very much behind. A lot of women are sitting on the Bench now in Barbados ... the magisterial bench. The chief magistrate now is a woman, and we've got three or four of the women now sitting on the Bench. They make excellent jobs of them too. In the Attorney General's Chambers, we've got one or two of them up there who come down to prosecute in the assizes."

But are women being as assertive in the profession as they should be or are they also challenged by the old boys' network that was created over the years and has become the springboard to many influential positions?

"I find them particularly reticent. They make their grievances felt, I'm aware of that. But I think that a lot of women in Barbados tell themselves that they would prefer to get there by merit, rather than because it's going to be a token woman in a post; and they are such male chauvinists in Barbados, they are not disposed to tokenism anyhow. Not in that kind of job. They are not going to put a woman on the Bench to say we've got a woman on the Bench. But women are earning their way into these posts, so when they get there, they are there then with authority, and nobody will be doing them favours."

*"... they would prefer to get there by merit ... and nobody will be doing them favours."*

This points to the precarious situation in which women lawyers find themselves. They are in a profession dominated by males, controlled by males, by standards established by males which fall far short of those by which women are prepared to compete. Men, it seems, have their own latch-key to the "profession", which women have vehemently refused to acknowledge and consequently, they expect their path to the top and to success to be a long drawn out one. The old boys' network which serves men and worked to exclude women from this traditionally male bastion of the professions, now makes it more difficult for women since they have already overcome the entrance barrier. Even men have stated that some prominent lawyers pay junior male lawyers better wages than they pay women, and the type of work they refer to their female colleagues, they would never send to men. There are no real comparative support groups in terms of age and effectiveness, for women. And how do they feel about that? This woman states emphatically: "there are a lot of trappings that men need that women don't. We don't need to get into these little boys' games that men tend to play. We don't have time for it. We are not pre-occupied with sexual insecurities and so on". Although she feels there is a lot to be gained from networking, she admits that women don't have the time to do

the actual networking and states: "Women are busy doing two jobs most of the time."

Another outspoken woman offers a perspective that looks far into the future. Feeling that no one is agitating for change, she contends that things will remain where they are, but admits:

"It will be interesting to see what happens in another ten years because I was admitted [to the Bar] in 1987, ten years from now I'll be 40 [years old]. At 40 if you are doing well in law you are doing well. You will have reached your zenith of your career or thereabouts at 40. Because of the number of women that have been coming to the Bar, there are going to be fewer men, far fewer in practice than there are now. If you look at the men who are now 40, 50 and the women who are mature at the Bar, there are very few women proportionately to men. What will be interesting is to see what happens 10 years down the road, when clearly, the Sleepy Smiths, and John Cheltenham, certainly no David Simmonses ... but I hardly see them in practice in 10 years. Now numerically, there are going to be more women. The question therefore is, 'will these women emerge to take the places of the Elliot Mottleys and Sleepy Smiths and Henry Fordes ... who ever you perceive as the big names in law? Or will those few men, who have been admitted to the Bar at the same time, eclipse the women and emerge to take those places? That is really what the issue is going to be."

This woman concerns herself with whether women are preparing themselves for this challenge that lies ahead and believes that current trends in the profession indicate they are not: "If we continue the way we are, with so few women going into litigation practices, clearly you can see that we are still going to have the same situation being repeated." In response to an article in one of the local newspapers that called for the removal of two magistrates because "they are giving bail too easily after the police have done a lot of work to bring these criminals in", she argues: "it was no accident that both of the magistrates to whom they referred were female ... nor was it an accident that the complaint came a week or two after two female magistrates in Barbados were appointed."



So that if there were six magistrates' courts in Barbados, I think three have men. All the others have women".

Women bring great competence to the profession and they nurture the will to succeed but there seem to be different barriers along their career paths that are set up for women. Ultimately, there are still operating in a profession that is male controlled and largely male perceived. And this woman lawyer points out their disadvantaged position: "There are a few things that have been going on for years in the system that nothing has been done about." There seems to be some disillusionment for some female lawyers specifically as it relates to their ambitions, their future and their powerless state. She continues:

"If women had more power, because none of us mean anything because we're not in the right positions. It doesn't make any difference if we made up something bright and sent it to the Bar if we're not in the positions that count. I think that if we were in more influential positions a lot more things would be happening that would benefit the Bar as a whole because women are more ambitious. Dr. S.R. is acting magistrate and she just got her doctorate in law. She's the first person in the Caribbean to do it. The only female... she's the youngest on the Bench."

Women have no power because they're not in the right positions. And they will not get there if it depends on sexual harassment, and probably if it hinges on an evaluation or assessment made by men using male criteria. It is somewhat disconcerting that these women appear to be trapped because they are not in the right positions, and they must also cope with the sexual advances of their male colleagues.

Men have indicated that women do indeed have great ability and do excellent work and one man in particular believes that women will bring the profession back up to the high standard it once projected. He explains:

"Women will take over the profession because it only means money to the men, whereas the women see it as a profession. At present the female judicial officers include three magistrates, the registrar of the courts, and senior government lawyers. It will help the profession if women take over because of dishonesty among the males, and the women go on to postgraduate work. However, although women are readily accepted in the profession, male chauvinists try to exploit them. Male chauvinism still exists."

Another man, with twenty years' experience in the profession felt that opportunities to reach the top were available to women.

"I see no reason why they can't go right to the top. I see that down the road, whether it be 10 or 15 years, certainly I think we will have high court judges who are women. As they progress through the profession and become more senior in the profession, they will be qualified. At the moment, there are women who are magistrates and doing a very good job ... a better job than some of the men."

One man, considerably experienced in trade unionism and the legal profession recognizes women's disadvantaged position which he attributes to the presence of the old boys' network, male chauvinism, and the male reluctance to integrate women. He contends:

"A fellow has a big matter and he feels that some person with QC behind their name can handle it better than some female lawyer, and the female lawyer may do more research. The female lawyer may not get as uppity with herself and think that she knows it all, and she may get more deeply involved in doing her research and produce a better opinion of it or a better document or better court representation than the man."

He also offers a forecast as to where men and women in the profession will be in another 10 or 15 years:

"A lot of the fellows who are 60 years old now will be at the end of their practice or retired, and the system can only carry so many people in a small country. And women will have to take on roles like criminal defence and so on. And not only that, the mere economics of the situation will demand that in order to get some work you may not be able to

specialize. You may have to go and take on criminal contributions and things of that nature."

But women are already predicting their role in 10 or 15 years. They intend to be named among the prominent lawyers and they are developing their own path to achieving that goal. What they seem to be worried about is that men's attitudes have remained static and according to the women, men find it difficult to interact with them solely on a professional basis. It concerns them that in discussing serious legal matters with men, their minds seem frozen on the physical femaleness of the woman and consequently, they have problems moving beyond that state.

### **Gender definitions of jobs**

The dynamics of the legal profession have undergone substantial change brought about by increasing female participation. More women than men are graduating in law on an annual basis from the University of the West Indies. Between the academic period 1980/81 and 1990/91 there was an increasing number of women graduating every year except for 1982/83 and 1984/85 when men outnumbered women. As recently as 1990/91 women accounted for 34% more of the graduating class than men. Barbados has a higher percentage of female graduates than males and this has serious long term implications for the profession in Barbados. It suggests that the monopoly men had on the practise of law for generations is slowly slipping away. However, men are not relinquishing this power without a fight. They have been creating male enclaves in such areas as criminal law and in civil matters where litigation takes place.

Family law has now been defined as a female enclave, since many women have

been excelling in that specialty. Criminal law seems not to appeal to as many women and the dynamics of the courtroom conflict with their philosophy. Nevertheless, women who practise in criminal court, are developing the skills and confidence needed for success. One young lawyer, who does very little criminal work explains her case: "I think the moral conflicts involved steered me away from criminal law". In other words, she was not intimidated by men. But sex segregation of work is only in terms of criminal and civil law. Men still dominate the profession and women's success is constantly measured against the standards established by men.

Women's inclusion in the legal profession creates dichotomies along gender lines. Men now contend that women are more suited to family law. This is an area where men have dominated for generations when women were still largely excluded from the profession. Women make excellent researchers, some men say, due in part to their penchant for detail. They have also been characterized as being meticulous. But none of them have said that women are excellent lawyers. It is not that men are designed for criminal court any more than they are designed for family law or any other aspect of the business. Both men and women shy away from criminal court due to the stress it exerts and the demands it imposes. But because of the over-representation of men in the legal profession, even if only a small percentage do criminal cases, it would seem like an overwhelming number to women since proportionally, men overshadow the women.

Are aspects of the legal profession emerging as gender specific? If so, what changes may have taken place in the last two or three decades that would transfer this suitability from men to women? Is there a hidden agenda? Some women have explained

why they prefer civil law to criminal law and the forces that helped to shape their decision. The young lawyer, who is also a popular cricket commentator explains:

"I myself have not looked to specialize because I thought I needed to explore the profession to see perhaps what I was good at or best at, and what I really like. But I have found myself being forced to do a good deal of family law, a good deal of conveyancing, which I'm not unhappy about, because that's safe. It's good steady work, and a little bit of civil litigation. But I found myself being pushed into those areas and because I'm getting that type of work, I'm doing it ... very few criminal law cases I do, really by choice. I'm not that keen on it ... I think the moral conflicts involved have steered me away from criminal law."

Family law and conveyancing are safe, and "it's good steady work". Perhaps the profession is reaching its saturation point. The male QC had pointed out earlier that there is one lawyer for every 1000 people in Barbados and on top of that Barbadians are not "a very litigious people". Where others have identified the demands and stress of this discipline, this woman is directed by the moral conflicts. Women are becoming heavily involved in corporate law in a way that men are not. Large organizations are recruiting in-house legal counsels and women are outnumbering men in this area. What is women's perception of this development? The magistrate states:

"It comes back to being tied in with family structure. It comes back to that because if you're in a corporation, you have to work hard, yes, but it might not be an eight to four or nine to five position. You might have to take home work, but if you take it home you can choose to do it after the children have gone to bed. If you're in private practice, especially if you're in criminal law, you can be sleeping and a client can call you at 2:00 o'clock and say 'the police just picked me up'. Now a lot of women won't want to get out of their beds to go down there. But that is part of the rough and tumble of the practice. So I think that is why they would shy away from that.

"It comes back to being tied in with family structure." Once more women's choices in specialization are shaped by family responsibilities. Men have trivialized the situation of

women by simply defining it as the rigours of the courtroom which keep women out. But women have identified other forces, citing the burden of the family and the intricacies of the old boys' network as the major barriers. And of those in criminal law, none are married or have children, and it seems to support the argument put forward by the woman above. Men contend that women are more suited to family law because they perform much better in those cases, and consequently, men are opting out of family law. Will this sex segregation of work ultimately become a mechanism for marginalizing women in the profession? This senior female lawyer states:

"That's another way of marginalizing women. I was kind of first in this field. It's not that women are more suited to it [family law] and that is why it happened that way. I think it is rather that men did not have the patience for it. Some men don't have the patience for it. Some women I know don't have the patience either. It depends on one's attitude to one's practice."

This woman believes that women who went into family law practice were able to discuss the issues from a first hand position and not a third person position as men have to do on numerous occasions and she explains:

"No man is going to sit down and talk to a woman for two and a half hours over a box of tissues ... the whole business of dividing the family property down to the teaspoon; days and hours of access to infant children, that kind of arrangement. I give my clients realistic service. I give them advice about their new status, because in effect, what they are getting is a new status if there's going to be a divorce or separation. Their new legal status. I give them advice about how they should invest. I give my clients a full service. I think a lot of men don't have any idea of all that family law entails ... it will be discovered in due course that women have a lot more patience when it comes to conveyancing, but it's just that men have dominated conveyancing and soliciting for all the years and that, perhaps, is a last bastion that will come down. But it will be discovered that women have infinite patience for the kind of very detailed work that conveyancing can sometimes employ."

This is the reaction of a well-established lawyer who is well known in family law. She has been singled out by both women and men as one of the most successful in family law. And as far as men describing women as excellent researchers she states: "what they are saying is that they see them as adjuncts to the profession." Women have given very convincing reasons for the choices that they have made in specialization. They have explored various areas and have concluded that they chose not to practise criminal law for various reasons. However, this does not mean that women will always shy away from criminal law. There are some dynamic women already involved, but what women in the profession are doing is laying the groundwork for those coming up behind them. Therefore, the challenges which this generation of women face will serve as the groundwork for future female lawyers. These women are doing much more than just practising law. They are making history as they restructure the society by giving women a place in the legal profession. The next generation of women lawyers will have it much easier and perhaps challenge men in other areas of the law, if they are still dominating at that time.

Contrastingly, one man, a male lawyer/politician, gives a contradictory assessment of that emotional involvement of women, and sees men as having the advantage by taking a more objective stand in family law cases. He explains:

"That's one area in which women differ from men. Men are almost callous. Male lawyers tend to treat their clients rough. Females are a lot more compassionate. I think they get more involved with the case. Certainly, from the way you speak to them on the phone. They are not as dispassionate as the men are. That dispassion is sometimes very important because if you get emotionally involved, your defences come down, and that is one of the ways in which men tend to capitalize, with dispassion."

While appropriate and necessary on one level, this ignores the fact that every case is different and that both men and women are aware that they must adjust to every case. When women say that they can sit for hours with women and listen to their complaints and give emotional support, it is to a large extent, a consequence of being able to identify with that particular situation. So female lawyers can easily understand their client's situation from a personal point of view. Not only are they representing the woman across the desk from them, they are also representing women as a group who had long suffered the dispossession of their rights in such cases. Another man gives his reaction to the categorization of women lawyers:

"I think that women have a little reluctance about doing criminal matters. I think it's by their own option, really, that they decide that they don't want to get involved in too much of the legal work of the criminal court ... and they prefer to shy away from that discipline. Maybe there is a male dominance in that area but that has projected an image of needing to have a brawn to sway yours to your way of defence."

This man sees it as a deliberate decision women have made. And perhaps to go into criminal court and compete with these seasoned and successful male lawyers in a system that has, for generations, made a synonymous link between the lawyer and the man, may not necessarily work to their advantage. Since they have chosen to establish themselves in other areas, in some of which they have a clear advantage, such as family law, it gives them the opportunity to begin the "long uphill trudge" with more confidence, and women in law will have gained recognition on their own terms and on their own. What is becoming quite obvious, is that when women deviate and establish their own route to success and emerge instead on their own, men sometimes become critical of that deviation. Women are shaking up the system and are taking options that are perhaps



discordant with the general norm but which offer success based on their own competence. And not all women shy away either. Some have been presented here who express a profound love for criminal law and who enjoy their cases tremendously. One woman said she even gets "a charge" out of doing criminal law.

And in terms of family law, this man gives a new perspective for this change in heart of men and sees it as an opportunity for women to establish a niche in that area as well. He explains:

"There is now family law which is much more simple than it used to be and a lot of men don't like it. A lot of men are shying away from it, partly because of the law itself, which gives women equal rights to men in a lot of things, that didn't necessarily happen before. So women have found a niche in that area. And I think to some extent, some of them, will be able to build up as good a reputation in that area if they just take the bull by the horns and become a little bit more adventurous. Take a risk. Some of them maybe able to set up family law practices that surpass a lot of the guys currently doing criminal law."

This appears much like a gender neutral assessment of the situation and it does point to other ways in which women can develop their own agenda for success in a male dominated field. It also confirms they do not necessarily have to follow the pattern developed by men for men. And this man also indicates another reason other than that articulated by most men, why they have virtually left the practice of family law up for grabs. According to this man, family law cases in the present context of today's law, deals a heavy blow to the male ego, as women are now given equal rights in such cases, with men. It is a power thing that has uprooted men from this discipline and left it wide open to women. It is a sharing of power and that seems to be the crux of the movement of men out of this area of law. And in terms of criminal law, where male lawyers felt

that most men commit the crimes so they look for men to represent them, is this the reason why men are so prominent in criminal court? Not according to this man. Men have a hidden agenda which has nothing to do with law, he states:

"Because you are doing criminal law does not mean, except probably for EM, you may make it in criminal law, and as I said, they only use it to become known. There are some of them, they are not even going to cut you down. They are trying to get into politics and in criminal law, as a result of being known in politics. These are the two things right now that bring you clientele. If one depended on being exposed in criminal law, you would have to find another way, for that side is divided up between a few attorneys."

Any wonder why women have been pursuing corporate law and other areas? And for those women who have defied the odds and have ventured into criminal court, are they at a disadvantage? He states: "A lot of it has to do with the exposure that some of them get. Most of them, I think, are just as good as the men ... I think that the ones who have decided that they will practise in the courtroom do not suffer that type of intimidation".

Intimidation in the courtroom is only one aspect of that which women experience. Men, by their sex alone, are given advantages over women. *"Women without a godfather, ... will not be able to get clients and survive."* And another man says *"a woman will find it very difficult unless she's given a real good opportunity ... in the legal profession"*. The quotes are just reminders of the situation of women in the profession and the "in-house" disadvantages. But the disadvantages against women do not stop there. Women face enormous problems financially in running their own practice, particularly if they don't have the backers and as one woman stated earlier, elitism will prevail. The most prominent female lawyer talks about the fight she has had in trying to obtain a bank loan from the major banks in Bridgetown which consistently refused her:

"I have not felt discrimination against myself as a woman in the professions: I felt it in the banks. The banks and I are no friends. I have been to every single bank in Bridgetown, not once, not twice, but three times in search of a loan. And I have been turned down by every single bank. In the end, I had to turn to my insurance company or mortgage finance. Banks to this day, they discriminate against me and I told them that. I was standing up in the banking hall, and in a loud voice I would tell them all. I didn't go and sit down in any manager's office and made it a whisper. I said: *'you are ALL discriminating against me because I'm a woman. Because I'm a professional woman. And because I'm a professional black woman. And because I'm a professional, single, black woman. If I had a husband, he would come in here and he would sign and I would have twice the money I was asking for'*. Three times in five years this happened."

She further explained that it was not against her personally, but that this was the banks' policy against women in general and even against their own employees. And she told the women in the banks that much:

"And I go into the banks, and I tell the bank girls all the time ... 'do not stand up and defend your bank because your counterpart in the head office in England or in Canada is getting twice and three times what you are getting. Better perks than you are getting. Your male counterparts here in Barbados, you may be getting the same basic salary, but you do not enjoy the same perks. So you have nothing to defend this bank against'."

Often, when she returns to her office, the banks call apologetically saying "Ms. M. I'm sorry that you had problems in the bank this morning", to which she replies "well, I would hope that you stayed in your office and heard every word without the benefit of an open door." It is interesting to note that this is not a potential client whose credibility is doubtful. It is, instead, a well placed woman in the legal profession, in politics, and in the society. Perhaps therefore, a well-feared woman. And perhaps so too are the women who challenge the glass ceilings, glass walls, and male values.

## **Conclusion**

The legal profession is one where women have had great success numerically, in changing the image of the profession. The presence of women is quite obvious and they are on the magisterial bench, which gives them more visibility in the courts and in the media because of the nature of their work. Consequently, their success in changing the gender composition of the profession is more widely recognized than say, medicine where the presence of women is not as widely publicized.

By the same token, the presence of women in the legal profession does not guarantee their success. The profession is highly polarized on a number of levels: along gender lines, private versus public office, commercial versus private office, and along lines of specialization. Women spoke of being marginalized in the profession because the old boys' network excludes them from many of the discussions where important decisions are made and where important cases are discussed. Men conduct most of the private business in the legal profession with a small number of women having their own private practice. Some women who felt alienated or marginalized by gender have moved into corporations and government agencies where some hold positions on their board of directors.

One of the major problems facing women in the profession is the fact men and their male colleagues have always treated the profession like a private club. This is even apart from the old boys' network. Therefore, even though women are part of the profession they characterize themselves as "adjuncts" in the eyes of their male colleagues. This gender difference is also observed by males who contend that women

are treated differently by males and do not get the recognition male lawyers receive in terms of respect or in terms of work transferred, or in terms of wages paid. All of which amount to sex discrimination in the legal profession.

Sexual harassment is pervasive. Women articulated feelings of threat to their success if they oppose sexual advances by their male cohorts. Others either fail to recognize it, or failed to articulate it, perhaps through fear. Those women who have recognized its existence stated that it is directed at women at the entry level right through the system regardless of the level they have reached. Even before a court case commences, a presiding female magistrate is often "complimented" on her femininity by a male lawyer in her court. This suggests that even where the hierarchy of power places her in a superior position, the male can still reduce her status to one below his by introducing a gender component ('you look charming today ma'am') by which the male is placed in the superior position to the female. This would perhaps remind her that he sees her first as a woman.

There is a developing dichotomy between the areas of work that women and men focus on. Areas of work that were once performed exclusively by men, have since been identified by men as appropriate to females. These include family law and conveyancing. Criminal law on the other hand has a male orientation and is not a specialty that many women are anxious to penetrate. Some men also try to avoid taking criminal cases because of the rigours of the criminal courtroom.

Family life for women and men in the profession presented a different scenario than it did in the other professions studied by virtue of the fact that the majority of the

women (8) were single. This allowed them to concentrate more fully on their professional growth, spending long hours in the office preparing their cases. Unlike women in the medical profession, female lawyers did not experience the need to limit their career growth to cope with family responsibilities. What is also important, is the fact that some of these women were able to pursue a political career simultaneously with their legal profession. One has even undertaken a high profile position in sports.

The concept of class has crept into the profession creating yet another dichotomy, but this is not in conjunction with the gender dichotomy. So that there is a class dichotomy based on economic and professional background of one's family. And it was pointed out that in this division, sexual harassment is not as prevalent in view of the fact that many of the males are family friends of women in their class.

## **CHAPTER 9**

### **The Political Profession**

In the past decade women have gained more of the political spotlight in Barbados: In 1989 there was a turning point in the country's history when a woman was appointed Governor-General for the first time. And in the 1991 General Elections, there was a record number of eleven women contesting the elections, making a dramatic departure from trends of the past 40 or so years. One party alone, (the New Democratic Party) carried six of these women on their slate. This was the largest female participation since women entered national politics in the 1950s. During this forty-year period, and except for 1976 when five women contested the elections, one of whom ran as an independent, political parties entered only one female candidate in 1951 and 1956 and two each election year thereafter. There were no female candidates put forward for the 1966 general elections. But these elections became the turning point in the political history of Barbados and also signalled an important concern for women: the nine general elections held during this period, 1951 - 1991 (due to the 5-year mandate followed), women made no more of a break-through with 11 contestants than they did with one, with the election of one woman. As a matter of fact, where they had a success rate of 100% in 1951 and 1956, they fluctuated between 100% defeat (in 1961) and a 50% success or defeat rate (depending on the perspective) right through, except in 1991 when the defeat of 10 women reduced their success rate to 9%. What influences women to go into politics?

What implications does this have for the country, specifically for women? It clearly suggests that women's participation in elective politics has not been received with

the same popular enthusiasm as their female colleagues' in many of the other traditionally male professions such as medicine, law, and commerce, where their presence and perhaps success, have become quite noticeable. What is the reason for this lack of support for women in politics? Much of the blame seems to reside with the political parties themselves, others blame women (Stuart, 1990). Since women were enfranchised in 1951, the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) was the only party to carry women on their slate in the first two general elections -- 1951 and 1956. The Barbados National Party (BNP) included a woman on their slate of contestants in 1961, but it took the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) fifteen years before they were able to put forward a woman, in 1971.

Presently however, the absence of women in elective politics is counterbalanced by their presence in the Senate where eight female senators have been appointed. But politics is still considered to be a male endeavour by both women and men. By virtue of the fact that there still remains one female member of parliament (or 3.6% ) of the total number of (28) MPs in the House of Assembly, it has often been claimed that this poor representation of women indirectly reflects a fundamental lack of female interest at the electoral level. But this argument was challenged in the 1991 elections.

The outcome of that general election has important historical and political implications not only for Barbados, but more importantly, for women as a population. First of all, it is uncertain why there were no more women elected to parliament. It is clear that many theories can be offered to explain the failure of women to gain more than one seat in any general election, given their increasing political participation. In



analyzing the failure of women in the 1991 elections, it is important to note that the majority of women who contested the elections ran on an NDP ticket. And it is equally important to be aware that it was not only women in this party who failed to gain a seat, but it was all of their male colleagues as well, including the party leader, himself an established, experienced and respected politician and physician. So the defeat of this large number of women should not discredit nor discourage these or other women. These six NDP women were not rejected because they were women. They were rejected because the party was rejected. And despite the fact that only one woman from the BLP was successful, two others made an impressive performance, one having lost by less than 500 votes to a more experienced male. This was not the case with any of the women in the new political party, none of whom even came close to winning their seat.

One must then ask how did women in the two major parties perform in this election compared with the men? Of the three women put forward by the Opposition BLP, one is considered a veteran politician and has held at least two large and important ministries during her party's two mandates between 1976 and 1986, the ministry of education and the ministry of health. She is also a prominent and successful lawyer, and a descendant of a well-known political family. She was the only successful female candidate in the 1991 elections. One of the other two women, in her mid-twenties at the time of elections, quite dynamic politically, is also a descendant of a prominent family, well known in the legal and political professions. The other woman, also quite young, is an articulate, dynamic and bright woman, who is emerging in the country as a very astute lawyer but does not seem to be as well-known politically as the other two women.

The importance of one's political background seemed to have played a role in the election results. Although it must be recognized that the young woman from the political and legalistic family is indeed a rising success in politics in her own right, as a newcomer to the scene and losing by less than 500 votes in her first general elections, one questions whether part of this performance over a more seasoned politician is attributable to her family name. It is however important to note, that these three women are characterized as very competent politicians two of whom are emerging as successful lawyers. The other is already a recognized success.

Of the two women from the successful Democratic Labour Party one is relatively well-known in politics having been elected in the 1986 general election. However, both had already constructed their own niches in the society before branching out into politics. And one in particular made an impressive performance even though she was not elected. It has often been stated that Barbados never elects more than one woman for the House of Assembly in any given general election. For example, if a woman from the BLP is elected, the DLP has failed to get one elected and vice versa. And this has been going on for years.

### **Political Trends: 1951-1991**

The following provides a tabular representation of political trends for women in Barbados as they developed over the past 40 years in nine general elections.

**Table 19**

**Number of Candidates by sex, female percentage  
of votes cast by Party, and number elected, 1951-1991**

Year	Candidates		Female % of votes cast	Female % Party Vote			# women elected
	M	F		BLP	DLP	NDP	
1951	45	1	1.4	2.2	*	*	1
1956	62	1	1.3	2.9	*	*	1
1961	58	2	0.86	1.6	*	*	0
1966	58	0	-	-	-	-	0
1971	48	2	4.3	3.0	5.2	*	1
1976	54	5	6.2	6.1	6.1	*	1
1981	58	2	5.3	6.4	4.1	*	1
1986	52	2	5.2	2.3	3.5	*	1
1991	79	11	8.5	9.0	6.7	18.9	1

Source: Adapted from Duncan & C'Brien: 1983 and The Nation  
Election Record 1991 Keepsake.

The above table shows that between 1951 and 1991 women have only had token representation in the House of Assembly except for 1961 and 1966 when no women were elected to Parliament (1961) and when no women were on the slates of any of the parties (1966). From the outset, women represented only 2.2 % of candidates, rising as high as 12.2% in the most recent general election in 1991. But even with this increase of 10%, from 1951 to 1991, if one considers that male participation rose by 75.5 % (or 34 males) for the same period, it demonstrates that women are still minimally represented. Also of importance is the fact that while a new party included six women in the campaign profile -- the most any single party has ever carried, its ratio of men to women was still a staggering 22:6.

In order to have a more microscopic view of the political position of women in Barbadian politics, it is essential to trace the behaviour of the electorate towards female candidates since 1951. For the first 10 years that women contested general elections, they received only minimal support from the electorate ranging as low as .86% (1961) to 1.4% (1951). But since 1971, support has fluctuated between 4.3% (1971) to 8.5% (1991), even though women were no more successful, numerically.

Similarly, where males on average received 3.1% of the party's votes in 1951, the female received only 2.2%. And has this discrepancy narrowed over the four decades? In 1971 for example, where women in the BLP picked up 3.0% of the party's votes, on average, males picked up 4.2%. In the DLP, women were more fortunate. Where they obtained 5.1%, the average DLP male obtained 4.1%.

The 1991 statistics shown in Table 19 suggest that on average, women and men obtained by sex, a similar percentage of the party vote: women for instance received 3.0%, 3.2% and 3.4% for the BLP, NDP. and DLP respectively. Conversely, men gained 3.6%, 3.7% and 3.6% respectively. Interestingly, the larger number of female participants improved neither their individual nor their collective support in terms of political ranking. And overall, men collected 91.4% of the popular support and women only 8.9% due perhaps to their under-representation. The vast discrepancies here imply that women have a long, uphill battle in order to achieve equally with men in the political arena. And it seems a long way off, given the trends of the past four decades.

**Table 20**  
**Average share of Party Votes**  
**by Party, by Sex, for 1951, 1971, 1991**

Year	BLP		DLP		*NDP	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
1951	4.5	2.2	-	-	-	-
1971	4.2	3.0	4.1	5.2	-	-
1991	3.5	3.0	3.6	3.4	3.7	3.2

Source: Adapted from Duncan & O'Brien, 1983 and the Election Record 1991 Keepsake of the Nation Publishing.

\* = This party was not in existence for any prior elections.

**Table 21**  
**Voting Patterns of women by no. registered,**  
**by no. voting, by female share of votes cast**

	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
%Females registered	57.6	58.5	-	54.0	53.0
Female Share of votes cast	51.2	55.0	53.6	55.0	55.3
Female voter turnout	57.5	57.6	n.a	72.9	65.5

Source: Adapted from Duncan & O'Brien: 1983

Table 20 offers a cumulative picture of the female voting pattern on a ten year basis over a 40-year period, beginning with the first general election after the enfranchisement of women in 1948. For the five decades, the percentage of females registered to vote rose from as high as 58.5% in 1961 and dropped to as low as 53% in 1991. In terms of votes cast, females accounted for 51.2% in 1951, 53.6% in 1971, and 55% in 1981, indicating increased female turnout over the five decades is even better. Female voter turnout shows greater involvement at 57.5%, 57.6% and 72.9% for 1951, 1971, 1981, and

1991, respectively. But this increased participation seems not to favour female candidates. Given that women make up 53% of the electorate, one would expect to find more female representation in parliament. This support could be used as a means of having women's issues addressed at the national level. It is important to note that since 1951 women controlled the electoral ballot in every general election. The reticence of political parties on women's issues is so acute that these male dominated parties are able to campaign for months and emerge from an election successfully without having any women's issues on their agenda, and without question. The Women's Bureau, established in 1978 with four employees, has not expanded in its 16 years' of existence in terms of employees, and as a result ambitions cannot be realized. What is more, it was initially established as a department of the ministry of labour, but was subsequently down-graded to a bureau, indicating perhaps, politicians' attitudes to women's issues. It is against this background that the situation of women in politics is being investigated.

The sample for the political profession falls short of original expectations in terms of numbers. The initial plan to interview 10 women and 10 men was not realized. Instead, interviews were obtained with only eight men and six women. The time factor was responsible either for appointments being cancelled or for the difficulty experienced in setting up schedules that were mutually agreeable. While many of the politicians are lawyers, a large percentage of whom are in private practice, some others have second careers. Therefore, political demands of these professionals as well the demands of a second career of others, made it extremely difficult in some cases, for appointments to be kept, or sometimes even to set up. The period during which the interviews were

conducted had been preceded by the general elections in January 1991, and was smack in the middle of political turmoil brought about by economic restructuring and political debate. There was a whole new political environment where politicians were spending long hours in the House of Assembly and/or on the streets in demonstrations and political meetings, invigorated by declining economic conditions. These activities substantially impeded efforts to synchronize and keep appointments.

Of the six women interviewed, three were single and three were married. Three of the six had children. The female politicians ranged in age from the mid-twenties to the early sixties. Two were previously elected members of parliament, one of whom still is. They were, among the women, three lawyers, a teacher/trade unionist, a top ranking civil servant, and an entrepreneur.

Six of the men were married and had children, one was a widowed father of three, while one was single. The majority of the men had more years of political experience than the women, with the exception of one woman who has been in politics for over 20 years and is often characterized as a veteran politician. All the men interviewed, except for one, had studied law, five of whom were involved in private practice at some point. What factors influenced women and men to go into politics? What are the major factors that influenced their career choice? The two groups indicated different factors and different levels of commitment. And in those cases where a second career was pursued, both women and men projected a difference in the ordering of priorities.

## **Career Choice**

What factors influence men and women to pursue a political career? The data reveal that the majority of women and men decided as adults to become actively involved in politics. Active political involvement seems to stem from or nurtured by popularity in other professions and sometimes in society. However, the legal profession seems to be the most popular launching pad for a political career for both women and men: five of the eight men had legal training compared with three of the women. Other activities such as trade unionism, and community work also facilitated active political involvement. None of the men indicated having any substantial familial political background, and do not seem to need it for political success.

One man, deeply involved in community work prior to party politics talks about his political initiation:

"My understanding of people in Barbados especially people from poor and deprived socio-economic backgrounds, did in fact assist me and also paved the way for me to be able to engage in activities that assisted people. Ventures that had a strong community orientation. So it was not difficult at all to make a decision to go into politics. In fact, as far back as ten or eleven years ago, the people in my own parish, in my own community, were insisting that I get involved. So that even though I'm a new comer to politics and contested elections for the very first time in January 1991, there was no massive swing to my party, but I was able to get a heavy personal vote and came out victorious. This then, would have been the sort of background against which I got involved in active politics."

A woman, involved with the trade union, summarizes the beginning of her political career:

"Working here at the college brought me more into political life and when Mr. G. was here, I was helping him with some political work before I became attached to his branch in a real way. I became vice-chairman of his branch after which I became chairman the year after. I was chairman



of his branch for about nine years. And then I got involved more in general council, which would be a bigger body. Getting into the normal higher politics, if you can call it that, than your normal little branch level."

These two speakers indicate that their community involvement and their political involvement at the constituency and branch levels became the springboards from which they were able to launch their political careers. And this does suggest that exposure and even popularity are crucial factors needed for party politics, a method utilized equally by women and men, though to different degrees of success. But what is suggested by such a route is that the individual can carefully map out a career path to politics which can be very successful.

Another popular route to politics is the generational approach: some of the most prominent politicians in the country have fallen into the footsteps of *fathers* or *grandfathers*, and sometimes *uncles*, thereby making it relatively easier for the incumbent. The historical obscurity of women in politics dictates that these traditions are handed down, for the most part, by men to other men. The most experienced woman in elective politics today, explains what it was like for her growing up in a home which most of the leading politicians often frequented. She states:

"I came from a house where politics was very much a high priority and we were always discussing or listening and gradually asking questions. My father did not shut me out from anything. He didn't treat me like a son, and he didn't treat me like traditionally a lot of daughters were treated then. *He treated me like a person.* So I went with him when I was allowed to listen into conversations, and then later on to join in the conversations when I felt I could do that. But I think that was the best thing that happened to me early, that *I wasn't discriminated against in my own household.*"

"*He treated me like a person.*" That was her experience, but far different from what

young girls in Barbadian society were experiencing at that time: girls were generally discriminated against on many levels in their homes. Perhaps this explains to some degree, why more women are not involved in politics and why those who become involved are not very successful. Sex discrimination which young girls experienced within their own homes may have been instrumental in shaping their minds, aspirations, and their perspectives of women and men, and perhaps convinced them that the second class position they acquired in society was acceptable and just. Girls were often discriminated against in favour of boys, who were treated differently, and encouraged to go into any field of study and occupation of their choice. Girls were confined to limits in both educational and occupational "choices".

Politics in particular, was projected, discussed by, and revolved around men. In other words, men were the core of politics and women, when allowed to be involved, performed only a support role on the periphery. And this woman, who states that *My father ... didn't treat me like traditionally a lot of daughters were treated then*", makes an exemplary female politician and demonstrates that the unsheltered female can be equally as successful as the unsheltered male. She is also a successful lawyer, and has international recognition due to the various organizations in which she fills important leadership roles. She also talks about the level at which she became involved in politics and the urgency with which she launched her political career: "I picked up political interest straight away as well. Everything started in January 1969. Straight up to Roebuck Street Labour Party headquarters. And then I got involved in a lot of civic work as well. Holidays were unheard of. Everything was a great time, and you know, I was so

passionately interested in everything. I liked what I was doing." Comparing the youth of that time and their political interests with the youth in politics today, she states:

"I grew up in that time. At a time when men and women could be pioneers. So people like D.S. and L.T., we were all founding members of the League of Young Socialists. We didn't do like this present League of Young Socialists. We weren't busy hanging onto the coat tails of the party. We wanted to know things. And so, we were into having people coming and giving us lectures and those sorts of things. People like C.L.R. James."

Essentially, this was a very busy time politically for newly independent Barbados. Young adults were being enticed into politics, initially by extending the franchise to a younger age group [18 years of age], and secondly by the encouragement they were receiving from the two major political parties. Equally important was the widespread of education and the opening of the Cave Hill Campus, which became a centre where young women and men of different political persuasions and regions, could easily meet to discuss political issues. So the general public was rapidly becoming more politically conscious and more politically involved.

Another female politician/lawyer, who, immediately after she was called to the Bar, was approached by the leader of one of the major political parties to join his party, talks about that early introduction to active politics:

"He pulled me aside after the ceremony and said 'you know, we are looking for young people, and I know that your parents are our supporters. I'm assuming that you are. Why don't you come and have a chat with me?' So I laughed and said I would talk to him in '96. But I decided in mid-1990 that I would run [become a candidate] and as '91 approached, they were really seriously looking for younger candidates, because a lot of the old candidates were leaving and they really wanted to bring in some new faces."

Having already built up some popularity through her newspaper column which by then

was well established, political parties were trying to exploit this opportunity by attempting to recruit her, since she would have already been known socially. She had come from a political family though she was as well known as some of the other women, but she insisted "I was always interested in politics. My grandfather was a parliamentarian, so I've always been interested in politics".

And some men got the same induction. One man whose interest evolved through his father's role in politics talks about the early stage at which he was first exposed to campaigning:

"My father was a politician. At elections in '61, at age ten, I went to political meetings with my father and he spoke on platforms. The socialization was very strong, so I quickly got involved. And in 1971, I worked with my present party as a coordinator for Mr. R. That was my first experience with politics. And it was also the first time I voted too. Then in 1985, I was appointed to a vote in a national corporation. That was my first excursion into administrative politics as opposed to general assembly politics."

Naturally, this suggests a smooth order of progression in politics for this man. And his involvement does reflect a good measure of stability which would assist him in moving into even more senior positions and in fact, he was appointed to the Senate in 1991. But it implies that for men, a political career can be developed and shaped with a great level of certainty. And although there are some men who are not as successful, the majority of men who go into politics are. The situation of women is different. Women are not successful in politics. And very few of them are socialized politically at a very early age. Historically, they have not been able to make that breakthrough which is central to the political process and consequently, they are still perceived as an external entity, in terms of the political arena.

## **Upward Mobility: The Only Female**

In politics, upward mobility can be traced from the party level right up to senate appointments. In the lower house, there is full male dominance with the token woman providing the female presence. But of course, this should not be directly blamed on any one political party since the House of Assembly reflects the elected representatives to parliament through general elections. The male dominance appears to be the perception of the electorate as they consistently deny women access to political power. Politics in Barbados is still very much a male career. Therefore, with the increasing female labour force participation, the political arena has still not been responding favourably to the plea for the inclusion of women. And there seems to be male ambivalence towards women at party level, and at the national level which facilitates restricting women to the outskirts of the political landscape. Women are clearly not very successful at the ballot box, and one questions whether this is linked in some way, to the ambivalence towards women at the local level. Women are very active in grassroots politics: they recruit, organize, coordinate, chair, deputize, and perform various roles in the constituencies and at branch level.

When it comes to the party executive, these grassroots women, who keep the political machinery functioning, are noticeably absent. At this level, it becomes once more, exclusively male, for the most part. Ambivalence originates with both men and women generally, through some conflict in perception of women at the lower levels and a perceived inability to serve in the leadership context.

One woman talks about the covert discrimination against women at the party

executive level. She states:

"I was very disappointed last year that the Party saw it fit not to have any women in its highest executive. I sat as a vice-president of the party at one time or another over 15 years, and I was defeated. But **no other woman has made it**. So the hierarchy of the Party has gone back to being exclusively male. And I watch M.B. and it's the same thing. She got back a vote this year as the current VP, so I think in that case it's good. But I don't think they take her seriously. And as I said, I see it in both political parties."

Couched in this statement is the ambivalence towards women by men and women at the party level. And this needs to be questioned. As the nucleus of the Party, part of its responsibility should be to promote an integrative attitude towards women and to give significance to their contribution. The importance of this escalates when one considers that this is a party which aspires to forming the government of the country. But this attitude is perhaps not peculiar to this party, for this woman further explained that where a woman remains on the executive of the DLP, she is likely not taken seriously. And even though this hinges on speculation, one queries if the small number of women on their election ticket is reflective of a bias towards women. But women are not just the innocent victims here. Due to the fact that this executive is elected by men and women, one immediately questions what is the role of women in this process that women do not get elected, and what future role do they perceive women to have in politics.

One further questions whom do women perceive to be their true representatives in the party executive and ultimately in parliament? It is this persistent ambivalence which has become a very difficult battle for women that needs to be questioned. They have to challenge men on an individual basis and on a collective basis; they have to convince other women that they can be successful and effective politicians; and they must

impress upon the electorate that there is nothing about politics that demands, or is specific to, the male species. Transmitting this message effectively is clearly one of the major challenges for women's success in politics. Women are not generally perceived as part of the political machinery in Barbados, and those few women who are successful are often scrutinized by society if they tend to veer away from the male culture of politics.

Women have not been any more successful in convincing the electorate in 1991, when one female was elected out of a total of 28 candidates, than they were in the early 1950s when one was elected from a total of 12 candidates. Barbados in general, but women more specifically, have not made any political progress in terms of integrating women into the political system, and certainly, falls far behind many of its regional neighbours where women fill high political offices, such as the Honourable Eugenia Charles, who is Prime Minister of Dominica. It is often argued that men serve men very well in these situations, and therefore, they elect men to serve on the executive and in parliament. But it is not only men who serve men well, nor is it only men who vote to keep women out. Women are also champions of this process and seem to see more ability and opportunities for success when they vote men into these positions. The problem therefore is the perception of the role of women in the home, in politics, and ultimately in society. The change needed calls for reeducating society, and of necessity, it must start within the home. The woman continues:

"At the level of the constituency branch, women do a lot of the work. At the level of the national executive, you have a good few women in there when the time comes to really do the work and not just sitting down at the table at a meeting. You will always find the women's league always trying to help out. But women need to become more involved at the level of making decisions. They have to get onto the party's executive and get

where the decisions are made. But we have to attract in politics more young women, and more women who are prepared to make that their civic contribution."

Another female speaks about the increasing disadvantaged position of women. She explains:

"If we do all the work, then why can't some of us get in there? I would like to see more women as president. There were about 75 names up for general council. You have to choose six, and not one woman was chosen this time, and the place was filled with them. The people at the conference were women. We have the annual conference at which you vote for the officers and then you vote for six members to sit on the council, and of these six there wasn't one woman. But women were up. There were 75 names so there were a few women up there, but of the six that actually got on, there were no women."

That women perform much of the work is quite common place but it is not often reflected at the higher levels. The two above statements, similar in context, are made by women from two of the political parties, both of whom question the absence of women from their executive, in view of their contribution at the lower levels. But what seems quite obvious is that much of the exclusion of women from the leadership positions hinges on the perception that both women and men have of the politician, and of the executive and of course, of women. This goes for both major political parties. But it is also important to note, that the party or the structure thereof, is no more than a microcosm of the larger political landscape where women hover around the corridors of power, without the necessary "requirements" to enter and participate in the decision-making process.

One of these women explains her anger and frustration at the minimal representation of women:



"In the hierarchy, there is the president, four vice presidents, secretary, assistant secretary, and treasurer. For the last four years, *I have been the only female*. Nobody else was nominated this year. I think what we need to do is to get a few women in there."

*Being the only female* is truly representative of the position of women in national politics for decades and this is when things are going well for them: there are times when no females at all are elected. Here, one is reminded of women having "to beat a little lonely path". And this has been expressed by women right across the professions in various ways, using a variety of terms but pointing to the one underlying and consistent theme: that there is generally the barest minimum of women, if any, at the top among groups of men in suits, where they are sometimes ineffective, due to an absence of female support both numerically and ideologically. And if this situation manages to escape the notice of the individual woman throughout a mandate, it is generally brought convincingly to the attention of the electorate at election time, when the parties' new manifestos are presented as a campaigning tool, and in which candidates are elegantly presented, and among whom is the token female(s). The two major parties presenting individually, 7% and 10% females candidates, and collectively, 9%, although 53% of the electorate is female. And this does not even become a political issue by women or by men.

A man gives his views on the absence of women from the higher echelons of politics:

"At the higher level, if you want to call it that, they [women] have not been very successful, and I don't think it's because they are women per se. It may be that at the ebb and flow of politics, one day you're in and the next day you're out. And unless they can emerge as leaders of the party, they won't emerge as prime minister. They have to make it to the

top within that microcosm designed by politics. And they don't come through there."

Women are largely involved at the core of the political party where the groundwork is performed. As the structure of the party nears its peak, there are fewer women found. And this man describes it as a lack of success at the higher level, *within that microcosm designed by politics*. But perhaps it goes beyond success. Women's absence at the higher level in politics seems consistent with that in the other structures and professions in society. It seems to revolve around the perception of women in society as a whole and the enigma which their role has created for them. There needs to be a new awareness that politics is not gender specific and that any capable person can perform the job. This is a message that has to be inculcated in the minds of the general population, women and men, girls and boys. And this is not a responsibility only for women. Much of this responsibility sits squarely on the shoulders of men who fill these leadership positions. By forming the parties' top executive, they become the decision-makers. Therefore, it becomes their responsibility to promote structural change which will eventually facilitate the process of propelling women "to the top within the microcosm", and at the macro level. Women are in an extremely weak position brought about by history and socialization. If the decision-makers are serious about integrating women they could initiate a process of change, similar to that made in the 1960s in their efforts to empower the politically disadvantaged. Specific efforts have to be made by those in the positions to effect the change. It certainly cannot be left entirely to the wounded to heal themselves particularly if they do not have the means.

Another man states:

"The council looks after the Party, but the political aspect of it is purely the MPs that are there. We have what you call a massive council which is the officer of the party, the chairman, the vice chairman, the secretary. There are about 10 people on this council of whom there is one woman."

These are the views of two men on the absence of women at the executive level, and the need to have more of them involved. And as the last speaker indicates, there is only woman on a 10-member council. What role therefore can she play in the interest of women? Any proposals she may put forward, any that she may oppose must have full support of men if her views are to be upheld or even recognized. She cannot do it alone. But the fact that there are hardly any women in politics, issues of sex discrimination that are brought up at meetings can quite easily be diffused by the preponderance of male opposition or male suppression of the female viewpoint.

One woman has explained this situation as "very frustrating" and sums it up by stating: "you've got to put more women on your boards, you've got to put more women on your staff right through. Not because we want more women, but because women have the skills which we need. And so, we cannot wait, we have to make this a question of accommodation because it will carry our work forward".

To Suggest that *"you've got to put more women on your boards"* is to suggest that women must penetrate that glass ceiling in politics which seems to carry the inscription "thus far and no farther". Penetrating this ceiling -- the political glass ceiling, is another major obstacle which female politicians must overcome. The difficulty of this obstacle is perhaps rooted in the fact that requirements for a political career are so loosely and informally defined, as opposed to law, medicine or even teaching. And the criteria used for evaluation seem to change as often as the candidates and the parties themselves. This

vagueness and informality of the structure may be deterrents to women, sometimes very competent women, who, it seems, prefer to rise to clearly defined challenges where they can more accurately measure their progress and their success in meeting these challenges. But in politics, the dynamics seem to change frequently while retaining that male image, that male culture which seem to discourage women.

And to take this woman's call even farther, *to put more women on your boards* is an appropriate point at which to clarify this obvious ambivalence towards women, and how the persistence of their exclusion from the decision-making process goes much beyond their success in politics. There are a number of boards which fall under the auspices of some of the major government ministries and a quick examination of board membership signals unconditionally, the attitude of elected politicians towards women. Four of the major ministries are used here to substantiate government's attitude towards women generally in society. For instance, the ministry of education has a total of 283 board members of whom, only 26% (or 74) are women [a discrepancy of 138]. Education is one ministry where women play a vital role in the teaching profession and effectively in society, so the uneven distribution of men and women on various school boards imply some measure of male ambivalence at government level, towards females generally. This small female representation in education reflects negatively on government. The ministry of finance (a ministry headed by the prime minister) has a total of 77 board members of whom women account for only 9%. Agriculture, food and fisheries has among its 31 board members one woman as does the public service commission, with its 16 board members. Both of these boards reflect the image of the

House of Assembly. The ministry of health, by far the most forward looking and advanced in terms of gender equality, is the most progressive in appointing women to top executive positions and to statutory boards. Of a total board membership of 59, women account for 41 % (Barbados Public Service Staff List, 1991). And in defiance of tradition, the *chief medical officer* is a woman while the *chief nursing officer* is a man. This would suggest that efforts are being made at least in this ministry, to place women in decision-making positions. One can therefore assume that the call *to put more women on your boards* is receiving a positive response, even if only in isolated areas of the structure.

### **Job Satisfaction**

The profession of politics seems to attract a certain kind of individual who is often driven by a particular ideology. By the time one becomes politically involved, the individual has already been influenced and guided by the ideological tenets of a given political party which may have been those espoused or followed by one's parents. Persons who become actively involved in politics are sometimes fulfilling various personal desires to change things. Often, the politician's involvement can be traced back to a period of academic training when an avid liking for debating and public speaking had become extra curricular activities. It may also be manifested at a later stage through community work. There always seems to be a definite pattern of development which culminates into political activity. A degree in political science is one of the academic routes to politics. Seldom do politicians begin their career at the level of elected politics. And in an effort to develop the young political mind, major political parties establish

youth wings to attract and mould the youth along the established ideological lines. This helps to guarantee continuity of the party's ideology and that its image is nurtured and retained.

Projected as a voluntary undertaking, political involvement implies that one must therefore experience enormous satisfaction from such activity. However, once affiliated with a political party, one has to conform to certain regulations designed to uphold the party's philosophy and image. This is the stage where deviations may surface, or discontentment experienced. What therefore leads to job satisfaction for the politician? In Barbados, most politicians have a second career to the extent where some have described politics as their career, and law as their profession. Law and politics in Barbados seem to share an intimate relationship, with a large number of the politicians being lawyers. The majority of these professionals are men who are able to move between the two professions with great ease and skill. Generally however, this movement between career and profession is guided by the outcome of general elections. Legal activity for them seems to subside when their party is successful in forming the government, and they themselves have been elected. Then they revert back to practising law when they lose the elections.

Job satisfaction in politics is significantly tempered and perhaps driven by the position of the party after a general election. Women and men in politics discussed job satisfaction from different perspectives but for women, partisan politics seemed not to have had much of an impact on their experience. Gender instead, appeared to be the linchpin in determining their experience and their level of job satisfaction. And the same

holds true for men to a great extent. Regardless of the party, men generally seem to relate to politics in much the same way. Politics in Barbados has been a male domain for more than 350 years. It has not only been dominated by men, it has been a male thing. And a young female politician emphasized this point to indicate the situation of women in politics as she explains:

*"We have had in our 350 years of parliamentary democracy only three female MPs, and not at one time. And none of them have tackled what could be perceived as women's issues. So that yes, the politician is perceived as male."*

This observation suggests that not only has the system remained stagnant for 50 years in terms of gender equality in politics but that women have been persistently marginalized in the system through endemic sexism. And if one is tempted to write off the first 300 years as historical backwardness and political domination (given the country's 340-year colonial status), certainly by the 1940s or so, enlightenment had already started to engulf the minds of the leading powers initiated by the 1937 Riots in the region and particularly in Barbados, that brought about significant social change. Fifty years later, Barbados is no farther ahead by not integrating women into the political structure where they can make a significant contribution. And as this woman vehemently points out, the three women who have been elected to Parliament during this period were not elected at the same time. Such minimal involvement of women is surely a misrepresentation of their actual political involvement, which must place them firmly at the centre of political activity at the constituency level. Contrary to the history of the political system, women in politics is still a novelty, even though their initial involvement commenced over 50 years ago. An important question ultimately arises. Since women are marginalized in

elective politics, do the few who have had some success enjoy being in the political arena? One senior female politician states:

"It helps if you are naturally a person who likes people, who can pick up with the younger people or the older people and feel at home with them. And I found great satisfaction in my constituency that way. What I'm trying to do is get a group of women together to motivate them. I can lobby for them. I can help them do certain things. I also have some projects in mind and I will do as much as I can and as long as I can because I enjoy it very much."

And she explains her initial involvement in politics and the level at which she entered:

"I was in politics before I was in elective politics because I was a member of the executive committee of my party, and then the head of the executive committee of my party. I was also the head of the Party's women's league and under my leadership we received the shield that is given each year for the best branch."

Certainly this is an achievement for this woman since not many women make it to this level. But this is only an example of the hard work women in political parties perform. Not only is this woman involved at committee level, but she goes out to her constituents and trains them in various handicraft skills in which she herself excels. She is very people-oriented and explains how she tries to get more women trained. At the other extreme, a very young woman who has adopted the male characteristic of moving between politics and law, and has been doing quite well in both fields, talks about her satisfaction:

*"My number one love is politics* but I see law as essential in terms of being a base and in terms of the fact that you never know when the electorate is going to send you home. But I know and realize that politics will always be part of my life. If I was not in politics, I could be making three and four times what I'm making now but that doesn't mean as much to me."

Expressing her love for politics, this woman explains that she is first a politician and then



a lawyer. And this perhaps points to history of politics that permeates her family. Her commitment to politics is demonstrated in her near success in her first general election, over a more experienced politician in 1991, and helps to consolidate her point that her number one love is politics.

Politics in Barbados is now attracting young women, most of whom are already professionally qualified and well known either at community and/or national level. Not many of them however, come from a background to launch them politically. Nevertheless, they express an innate love for the profession, as another young senator indicates: "I think I particularly like politics. It has become part of me." This woman who has had enormous experience at the branch level, was propelled into politics through her trade union involvement. Initially starting out by assisting a male colleague who has since become a member of parliament and holds a cabinet portfolio. She herself now contests general elections. Interestingly, she characterizes herself as having been *second man* to her male colleague, alluding perhaps to the male culture of politics. She now employs that dedication and hard work for her own success and has some women working on her behalf.

As individuals and as a group, women contend that they need to muster electoral support. The electorate seems to become more intimately involved with female representatives, maybe due to their small numbers. But they seem not to view women in politics as seriously as they view men. And one submits that they may give the token woman support precisely because she is a token among a whole group of males.

Men talk about their satisfaction in politics quite differently, as this senator states:

"I am quite happy in politics. Both on the platform and in the Senate. I am glad I got involved. I like doing the things that I am doing. Some people are, unfortunately, in jobs that they don't like. But I enjoy the things that I am doing. In each case [teaching and politics], I am dealing with people and I enjoy that. I like social interaction. Because I have taught for a long time, if I had to choose now, I would choose politics at this point in time."

*"I am quite happy in politics."* This statement is developed out of the fact that, having campaigned in general elections for his party, this man was subsequently appointed to the Senate, which allows him to remain actively involved in politics. He seems to have much campaign experience and was chosen to be one of the two opposition senators. Not many women expressed their job satisfaction in politics in this manner. Women spoke in terms of making a contribution to people in terms of transferring skills, lobbying, and constituency work. As a matter of fact, it is the aspect of campaigning on the platform that seems to be the most challenging for women. No women have indicated any particular enjoyment from going on the platform. In addition to utilizing the platform for addressing certain political issues it often becomes the podium for sexist remarks and what is known in Barbadian politics as mud-slinging and "character assassination". Consequently, platform campaigning becomes, and has been described as, very intimidating for female candidates.

Door to door canvassing is another natural aspect of politics in Barbados, and one with which men are usually at ease, regardless of the type of household. Generally, men seem to adapt easily and execute this door to door canvassing in fine style as they are often well accepted by both men and women, even when they are from opposing parties. Women on the other hand, are generally not as adaptable in these situations, but those

in elected politics must confront the challenges of this type of politicking and emerge as effective, at least, as their male colleagues, if they are to be successful politicians. It often calls for rapid situational adjustment, eloquence and control. One woman in particular speaks about the intimidating experience it can be: "I remember one Sunday morning I was canvassing, and I went to a house where there was a group of young people on the verandah. I introduced myself and they looked in the other direction". This in itself could be discouraging but she was not discouraged as she explains:

"Then one said 'I'm really sorry, I suppose one of the old people in there will talk to you'. And I went in. and I'm in there for like five minutes and I haven't seen or heard a soul. And the very first thing I was hearing was 'God blind you, I hope that is no rasshole BLP sitting down in my house!'"

Such an environment is one with which most women in Barbados would not want to associate, and would perhaps want to leave without any delay. But this was not just any other Barbadian woman. This was a politician in the making, who was quickly understanding and adjusting to the flavour of Barbadian politics in which she had become involved, even though it was her first test. How did she react to this Billings Gate type of environment? She states:

"And with that a man came through the door. And I said 'well, I really hate to tell you, but it's a rasshole BLP sitting down. What do you plan to do?' I think that response took him totally by surprise. And he said 'get up let me see you'. So I stood up, and went across and shook hands. And he said 'I like your bottom, though'. And realizing that colour was important to his generation, I said 'you old wutless red man, what you doing looking at my bottom?'. To which he replied: 'girl come let me hug you, I like ya talk'. And we became friends from then on."

Crude as it may seem, this man's was making an important political statement that had serious implications. First, he was either indicating he was very disillusioned with the

BLP, which may have antagonized him perhaps ideologically, or administratively, and secondly, he seemed to be blaming them for his own social and economic condition.

- Nevertheless, this type of behaviour is a deeply embedded aspect of canvassing with which men seem to cope comfortably and also quite differently. And maybe this is what the seasoned politician referred to when he said that women have to fight the election as it is normally fought and that they cannot fight it as women. They first must get themselves elected and then try to change it from within, which seems to be the strategy that this woman is using. And she explains the impact: "So from that point of view it is difficult, because if you're a timid person, you can be intimidated completely, or you may go into a household and you may be talking and the person maybe saying nothing to you at all. You don't know if you are making an impression, if they hate you, if they like you, if they want you to leave. So canvassing is difficult."

However, one can immediately recognize the sexuality aspect introduced to the female politician by potential supporters. One discounts the obscene language as it can be classified as gender neutral and may be used with women or men. But would any potential supporter say to a male candidate "come let me hug you"? or "I like your bottom"? or demean him even farther by addressing this potential member of parliament and government minister as "boy"? This is one of the male challenges women in politics in Barbados face because these are the people who will either put them in the House of Assembly or keep them out. And although it was this woman's first election campaign, she was indeed quite tactful. And where this man spoke in sexist terms and suggested the candidate come to him for a hug, she kept a certain formality by offering him her hand

of introduction. It is indeed a "slow uphill trudge" for women in politics. Differential treatment by their colleagues, and by the electorate transforms it into an uneven battle which leaves women far behind their male colleagues. Women who are successful in politics should be overwhelmingly applauded. The less successful should also be applauded for their efforts.

A young male politician gives his views:

"I think it is my first calling and it is the exercise out of which I get greater satisfaction and in which I think I can achieve most for others. But there is a lot of that in law too. But the practice of a profession in Barbados is very constricting for a number of reasons."

Comparing the professions of law and politics, this man makes a choice based on his level of satisfaction. *"I think it is my first calling"*. This is a statement articulated by some of his female colleagues, some of whom are lawyers. And this kind of satisfaction generated from politics seems not to be driven by gender or sex. One may argue that the distinctions come from opportunities and the access individuals may have to them. But the practice of politics itself, seems enjoyable for both men and women, but to varying degrees. And this man explains further:

"I think I get a lot more [satisfaction] from the point of view that you are defending a policy. In politics as long as you are accepted, you come into contact with so many different features of human life, which bring your sensibility to power and it demands what you want out of politics. If you use it as a means of regeneration and empowerment of others and delegation of functions, you will be o.k. But as soon as you become reclusive and almost omnipotent, you won't get any job satisfaction."

Job satisfaction here is determined by one's political ambitions and for this man satisfaction can be derived from empowering people, from becoming more aware of various aspects of human life, and from remaining in contact with the people. Such

characteristics are not generally associated with modern day politicians who are often perceived to dissociate themselves from the people after they are elected to parliament.

Another politician/lawyer gives his views:

"I am a lawyer and then a politician. Because I'm fairly blunt, eh! To me you have to be reasonable. I don't have any particular political ambition at the moment. Unfortunately, it has waned somewhat. I was prepared to make a contribution but not necessarily in competitive politics. Out there, I don't find it appealing, to tell you the truth. If they want me to serve as a minister, or whatever, I would do so, but from the senate." I would run again, but I don't think I have the passion to do it."

*"I am a lawyer and then a politician ..."* This sounds more like a happy lawyer than a happy politician and it certainly separates him from his colleagues in politics who speak of having a passion for politics. His attitude is less aggressive than that taken by most other male politicians. Embedded in his statements is the uncertainty of the success of a political career. Thus he sees his legal profession as his priority and perhaps as both his career and his profession, which is quite contrary to the majority of the politicians interviewed.

### **Family Life**

There is differential effect of the impact of family life on the political career of men and women. But since the sample is not equally balanced it is difficult to make a comparative analysis. Instead, comparisons will be made on an individual basis where possible. Characteristics of the sample indicate important differences. Political life in Barbados does not involve the vast amount of travelling as political life in North America, and as a result, the official job of the politician may, in its simplest form, be

seen in terms of a 9-5 job in relation to family life. Furthermore, the vast majority of politicians are men [27:1] most of whom are married and have wives who, if they are in a traditional type household, will generally seem to take charge of domestic responsibilities and childrearing, even if they are professionals also. But for those female politicians who are married and those with children, there is often some kind of support network that can facilitate their political activities. Therefore women and men seem to have similar flexibility in terms of family life in coping with their political career. But do these politicians discuss their individual cases? Are there differences and similarities based on sex? One woman states her views:

"I think women decide if they are going to have families, what part of their children's lives they are going to spend with them. Some mothers stay home when they are infants. Some want to be there when they are teenagers, and they make their choices. But I think that the choices by some of these women, a lot of them are being directed by market forces just as well."

*"... women decide ... what part of their children's lives they are going to spend with them."* Women today are redefining their role in childrearing and in the family and are doing so by placing it in a totally new context. They still hold themselves responsible but in ways quite different from those traditionally prescribed. And it is observed that although they seek more spousal involvement they have radically changed their role in the process. As the above woman indicates, women are no longer taking full responsibility from birth to adulthood for their children. They are demanding greater participation from fathers and increased state involvement particularly at the pre-school level through day-care facilities. Women are now quantifying their maternal responsibilities as the above woman states and are specifying at what point in the

development process they will make their contribution. This is perhaps in response to their need to seek independence by establishing themselves in a career or profession, in much the same way that their spouses are able to.

One young woman talks about her two demanding careers:

"Well, I'm in the fortunate or unfortunate position, depending on how you look at it, of being very much single and without responsibilities of that nature. So that's why I can be involved in politics, law and the band [which she manages] at the same time. I don't have to go home and cook for anybody at any set time. It makes no difference whether I have a family now I'm in my profession or whether I have it in two years, five years or ten years. I believe in the close knit family. But having said that, whether I myself want to have children, this is not something where I have made up my mind."

Certainly, this emphasizes women's new attitude towards family life and children and indeed marriage, and the fact they have slipped in the ordering of priorities. And this new attitude is even more pronounced as women seek to establish themselves professionally. Why the attitudinal change? Expectations upheld by society of women and their role in the family had fundamentally denied them the opportunity to be other than mothers and housewives, regardless of their capabilities, and consequently, the social structure has been etched out in away that systematically confined women to those roles. But since society has taken on a new direction in the development process, most women are seeking to play roles other than those socially prescribed that will give them independence and disconnect them from the home in the traditional sense. Therefore, marriage and family and the role of women in them, have come under severe scrutiny and criticism from women who are opting for other roles, and those who want to redefine those traditional roles. And this new attitude is also highlighted as this woman



points out that it makes no difference to her whether she has her children in two, five, or ten years. Investing most of her energies in her career and profession, she demonstrates much dynamism in senate debates, projecting enormous political potential.

Men too, are also entertaining a new approach and new attitude to the institution of marriage and family, though not to the same extent. A male lawyer/politician who has never been married, explains he has no immediate plans to do so:

"I think it [marriage] is affecting me in a strange kind of way. I am not so sure that I would want to face that for security reasons. So I'll stay as I am. So that maybe is an indirect way of answering your question. It has affected me very, very much. Significantly. Not that I have deliberately decided not to get married, but my experience has told me it looks good the first two or three years and then problems develop. And there is an easy way out, you know, you just go down the road and get a divorce."

This man is reacting to the new Family Law Act of 1981 which recognizes woman's role in the family and attributes to her a vast amount of rights in separation and divorce settlements, which were denied her previously as a "non-contributing" partner. Thus, his decision not to marry and have a family is based in part on retaining assets, while the woman's decision not to marry and have children is based on seeking a new lifestyle where she defines and shapes her own independence. Another male lawyer/politician speaks about his family life and his political career. He states:

"My wife is exceptionally supportive of me in politics. As a matter of fact, she seems to be more keen on my part to stay in politics than in law. She sees law as a type of profession that can make a person become cold and calculating as a professional and so obsessed by power and prestige that she might have reservations over my being in law. Because of the stereotype that successful lawyers are big and arrogant and pompous, she supports me in politics. She knows my community background."

*"My wife is exceptionally supportive of me in politics"*. Presumably, women are generally

supportive of their spouses regardless of profession, if public appearances can be used as a measure: the Kennedys, the Nixons, the Fordes, Reagans, Bushes, etc., and locally, the Adamses, the Barrows, the Sandifords, for example. And no women with the exception of one, have made a similar comment in terms of spousal support. Women's involvement in any political party did not seem to be constructed from support of women's groups. Nor have they been recruited to advance any particular political position relevant to women's development or women's issues. So they are virtually on their own in the party, and in politics, and generally seem to have no known female support in the wider context. Women in the professions must work diligently to achieve success, and particularly more so in the political profession. Therefore, because of this under-representation of women in the House of Assembly, and the absence of real female support, there is very little that a lone woman in parliament can achieve politically, particularly for women as a population, as there can always be that possibility of any motion of hers being defeated 27 to 1.

### **The Structure of the Political System**

Parliament is made up of the Senate and the House of Assembly. There are 21 members who sit in the Senate 12 of whom are appointed by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, two by the Leader of the Opposition, and seven as representatives of interests considered appropriate by the Governor General. The House of Assembly is made up of 28 members. The political system is based on the Westminster system of government and general elections are held on a five-year basis.

Political campaigning often takes men into what are known as rum shops or bars, where they spend much time with small gatherings having a drink and debating issues. They may be seen playing dominoes, and other sporting activities in neighbourhoods. These informal meetings are where a lot of support is mustered but they are venues which are not generally appealing to the female politician, and where she is certainly not expected to be seen. This is due largely to the cultural behaviour and expectations of the Barbadian public. Consequently, women and men contest general elections from two very different positions. In addition to this, campaigning from the political platform also puts the woman at a great disadvantage and often becomes a deterrent for her. Historically used as a forum for personal attacks on opponents, these meetings have become a public form of intimidation for women who have not adapted to the current style of political campaigning. Thus, this appears to be a major barrier to their own success in politics. It is not that women are expected to behave like men, but they have to adapt and contest elections within the present format, which happens to be male designed. A senior male politician cautions:

*"Women cannot go into politics expecting to be treated differently because they are women. That's not how politics works. They are going to come under the same attacks as anybody else. Women want to stay on the outside and change the way politics is conducted. What they need to do is get elected and then try to change the process from within. They can't do that from outside. And they will be given the same treatment as anybody else."*

This in itself points to the fundamental dilemma in which women in politics find themselves. Structurally designed by men, the practice of politics in Barbados reflects a male culture which has become widely accepted. Unlike a profession like medicine which, universally, is generally the same for the most part, politics takes on the culture

of the social context in which it is practised, changing as the structure evolves. And though Barbados has been undergoing major structural change since the 1960s, the political change observed did not really relinquish its maleness: it expanded to include more men. Women gained more access to politics but the male culture of the profession was retained. Women therefore found themselves in a conflicting bind: they are viewed as "ladies" but are assessed on the same basis as men, thus creating the stranglehold from which they must emerge. To do this, it is important to educate the general public in the characteristics of a good and effective politician, and what women are capable of doing as politicians, and that gender specific contributions are equally valuable. To deny women a role in politics is to deny the country half of its valuable resources.

In talking about women in the political arena, one male member of parliament was adamant in his attitude towards women in politics:

"In the campaign, some remarks I made in Bridgetown were construed to be an attack on womanhood, and all of a sudden you are hearing that she should be sheltered from this kind of thing, and this is why women don't enter politics and so on. I think all of that is irrelevant. It has been no kinder to me than it should be to them. And I don't believe that I have to extend any additional courtesy other than that which I would extend to women generally, being born of a woman. There is no other additional courtesy. But there are a lot of women who seem to think that they should be cocooned just because they are women. And people tend to detect that kind of thing and dismiss it too. They basically say there is no need for this kind of system. I don't think society requires women as appear to be persons of virtue because they are running in politics, any more than they require that of men. They require, I think, ability."

Echoing the sentiments of the previous speaker, this statement makes one question whether or not women do expect to be treated differently. Women have been calling for sexual equality for years. But even if women do not expect differential treatment, they do receive it. For example, why do political parties often include only one or two

women among their 28 or so general elections candidates? Why are women often excluded from the executive body of political parties? why are top administrative positions in government, and the private sector for that matter, held by men? why do women get minimal representation (if any at all) on the various government boards, even when those boards are dealing with matters close to the hearts of women? why are there differential salaries and differential perks for women and men? why are women discriminated against in their own households and in society? why are women sexually harassed on the job and elsewhere? Why are decision-making positions generally held by men? In short, why do men dominate society? This seems tantamount to differential treatment for women!

Another male member of parliament, gives a different opinion:

"The attitude of Barbadians to women in politics is changing. Thirty to 35 years ago, women were seen more as supporters and canvassers, than as direct active politicians. But in recent time, society is accepting women as politicians. It is just that the nature of the campaigning when it gets bitter and hostile, women have their own dignity to protect, and a lot of women who would normally have a contribution to make, are afraid of coming out there so as not to be vilified and have their characters assassinated. But there have been a good 6 to 10 women in the last 20 years, who have made themselves available, of whom about 4 or 5 have been successful."

The distinction made here implies that men can indulge in the hostile and bitter nature of political campaigning and can even be slandered and have their "character assassinated" and still emerge from it all, unscathed. Women seem not to be able to emerge unscathed as far as society is concerned simply because they are not expected to engage in this type of male behaviour. Therefore, they are at a disadvantage and in order for them to have an equal opportunity they must be allowed to participate in the system

as it exists without reprehension by society, and they should be able to emerge from it in the same unscathed manner as their male colleagues. "... when it [the campaign] gets bitter and hostile, women have their own dignity to protect." This indeed points to a gender distinction based on differential treatment for, and differential expectations of, women and men. In other words, what is acceptable for men in terms of character is not acceptable for women, making success for the female politician increasingly difficult. The fact that there have only been 6 to 10 women in 20 years who made themselves available implies that a serious problem does exist. Women form the majority of the electorate (apx. 53%) and are active at the party level and their rate of turnout at elections is generally high: in the general elections of 1991 it was 65 %. Women are also attaining higher levels of education and are challenging female stereotypes, making inroads into almost all other areas of society. Why is it so difficult for women to make a career in politics?

One senior female politician talks about how women are ridiculed in campaigning.

"I can rally it. I can weather it. But there are a lot of women who were first-timers out there, who will never come back. They will never run again. This was on the platform. It was awful and to think that they all aspire to it. They talked about our private parts. I had everything said about my private parts, my reproductive parts, and so on and so forth. It has put women off. I'm sure there were a good few women who said 'look, if that's their attitude, there's no way that I'm going to run'."

Campaigning from the political platform at mass meetings is a forum not very cordial to women or men. Those who have developed the appropriate skills still often come under vicious attacks from hecklers, as they speak. This intimidation would seem to discourage potential candidates particularly when coupled with derogatory character remarks from

opposing teams, as they address their gathering from their platforms. It is often said that this style of politics that keeps women out. Unless politics in Barbados loses that style and adopts a more neutral one, the process may keep very competent women out of the arena and ultimately deny Barbados a valuable contribution from its female population.

Another woman gives her views:

"A man is an accepted person to do everything that is supposed to be done authoritatively. Therefore, when he takes on a role nobody questions him, even in their minds, as to why he is there. Whereas with a woman, there's always the question of 'why is she there? What does she want? and who is she?' You will always hear people ask about what motivated you to become involved in politics?' But they expect the man to be motivated to be in politics. *We are still babies* in it, even though we want to be bold-faced and confident. We are babies and they will crush you without even recognizing that they are crushing you because they aren't looking out for you."

Women are still babies in politics even though they have been actively involved for over forty years. With 40 years' of political experience women are still perceived as stepping into a foreign domain. A domain that belongs to men. Both women and men in the wider society seem to display a high level of ambivalence towards women who venture into politics. They do not seem to accept women as real politicians. Whereas, men, and sometimes very young men, become involved in the political process just weeks prior to a general election and get elected. And then there are women who would have been well-known through various community activities and cannot get elected. And those few who are successful and are well known nationally, are still treated with ambivalence. One woman during her campaign was told by whom she termed a "middle class man" that "women getting too powerful in this country. And something has got to be done to stop you all".

Another female politician states:

"It is really an enriching experience. It is very difficult you know. I don't think people recognize how difficult it is, particularly the canvassing in certain areas, because every house that you go into, you are a candidate or the candidate. Whether you are the candidate of the party they support or not. And everybody is making an assessment of you. Everybody wants different things of you. And you have to immediately upon getting into a house, or meeting a person, zoom into what it is they want in a candidate and try to be, not other than yourself, but try to be what they want."

*"I don't think people recognize how difficult it is."* This is the assessment of a woman after her first bid at general elections. She found it difficult but enriching and part of the difficulty came not only from being a woman, but from the sheer demands of contesting the elections. The role one must adapt to and the flexibility needed to campaign among representatives of the opposing parties. It also comes from the pressure of one's first election contest which may be a difficult experience for both women and men, though to varying degrees.

A more seasoned female also speaks of the difficulty politics for women:

"Sometimes I despair. How shall I put it? Women will get there at the top in politics by the dint of their own efforts, and again, not through any tokenism. Believe me, Ms. Charles is not Prime Minister of Dominica today because they wanted any tokenism. She was their deliberate choice. I didn't get into the party because they wanted any token woman. I got to run in the city because no other man wanted to run in the city and T.A. said 'you have to do it, for all kinds of reasons...And I wasn't thinking that I would have won in the 1976 elections, I was planning to run in 1981. It was a big election. I don't think that by and large, the political parties in the Caribbean are really ready for women. But you cannot wait until people are all ready to please, because in some cases, they never become ready."

Choosing her to run in the city resulted largely from the reluctance of men to take on the challenge. Women, it seems, more often than men, must be perceived as definite assets



to the party to be propelled into such a visible position. And being from a family where the City was the pivotal point of its political success, the decision to run her in the City cannot be seen as paving the way for women in politics as much as it was to guarantee the party success in the City. This woman had a great deal to offer her party. Not only through family connections but through her own political prowess, her dynamism in law and her intellectual capacity. So it was perhaps not so much what her party could offer her as a woman, but more so what she could offer her party, given her background. This is sometimes the case with men as well but what is different here is that most men are often moulded and slotted into positions where women are often overlooked and seen as risky, perhaps. Some men who have been described as "unknowns" before the general elections, have been allowed to run for a party, some of whom have been successful. But this again, speaks of society's perception of the politician.

This woman sums up the situation of women in politics:

"We have this thing, it happens by chance that we always have a woman in politics. From the day of adult suffrage in 1948, we've always had a woman in politics. But nothing more than one. Except for just three months where I went in and Gertz was still in. And then in the next elections, three months later, she lost her seat. And when I came out M. went in. M. comes out. I go back in. It's very lonely. there are many issues on which I thought if I had some women in here speaking, nobody would be in any doubt about this particular point, or this particular issue."

*"It's very lonely."* Being the only woman in itself amounts to great pressure, whether in the government or in any other institution or organization where all the other members are male. And perhaps it is particularly difficult in government because as an elected member, one needs to push certain issues through for one's constituents. But as an isolated female MP, being successful may become more difficult not only from the

gender perspective, but also because of the pressure associated with trying to keep campaign promises to one's constituents. And then, any attempts made to improve the situation of women in society seems an insurmountable task for the lone female member of parliament.

### **Gender Defined Jobs**

The presence of females in backroom politics stems from their inability to penetrate the political glass ceiling and glass walls for the past 45 or so years, to become members of parliament. And as a consequence, political portfolios are generally held by men, with the exception of two ministries between 1976 and 1986, when the Barbados Labour Party formed the government. During that period, the MP for the City, a woman, held the portfolios of minister of education and minister of health.

One man gives this reaction to the absence of women in the political system:

"They [women] are almost a kind of support mechanism for the body politic in that you won't see, even now, a woman on any committee. It will happen but I just feel it takes a while before women can move in. Politics is not the easiest field to move into. And you almost have to be mannish in a sense. I'm sorry to say this sort of thing although I'm on the record, but you will find that those females who go into broader politics, have very masculine tendencies."

Capturing both the male image and the male perception of politics and politicians, this man acknowledges that women become a support mechanism for the [male] body politic. He even states that you won't find women on any committees. But they work hard to get the men elected and much of this work takes place in a very systematic manner. This man also explains that women who get actively involved "*almost have to*

*be mannish*". In other words, they have to adopt male behaviours if they want to be politicians. Here again is that gender bias. Excelling in the professions seems to be perceived as only a male experience. Therefore, by virtue of their femaleness this experience escapes women. Is it to be assumed therefore, that access to the professions for women is only a pacifying mechanism as it is perceived that professional excellence is in part, conditional upon being male.

To be in broader politics women must *"have very masculine tendencies"*. In his explanation, this male politician contends that the most successful female politician *"...is quite aggressive, you know"*, even though she appears to be soft and gentle. Certainly this man uses stereotypes to corroborate his point and makes an extremely broad assumption by suggesting that women who enter the broad politics have very masculine tendencies such as being "quite aggressive". Suggesting that aggressive behaviour is masculine. What defines it as masculine? And furthermore, he is being judgemental? Another person may describe that same behaviour quite differently, maybe even as assertive, and imply nothing to do with aggression. Characterizing this woman as *"soft and gentle"*, he portrays these as female characteristics, which this woman abandons in "broader politics".

Another man suggests there needs to be a broader view of, and a more positive future, for women in politics:

"Women are heading different entities within the corporate world, and therefore have an experience in leading, and leadership. And it's only a question of time before there will be pure equality between men and women in terms of politics. As campaigning improves, and hurts people less, I think more women will come out. But at the moment, they are in the minority in politics, precisely because I believe they fear having

people refer to their sexuality in pejorative ways, and in demeaning nasty ways. Because in Barbados, *the campaigning is quite nasty and personal.*"

"Pure equality" may be somewhere down the line, but only when the political process becomes less pejorative for women, that is, when political campaigning focuses on issues and not on the candidates themselves. Until then, successful women have to be "mannish". One politician blames pejorative politics another blames the female voters for women's plight:

"I think there are surely more than 28 women in Barbados who can stand that kind of pressure and there are only 28 seats. I think the problem more resides with the women who have to vote for them rather than the candidates who run. That is where the problem is. The women can also create a path for themselves. It requires hard work in the constituency. I think that if you get women who are prepared to go out there and do the work, they will get elected. And they would do a much better job than a lot of the men in parliament."

A woman reacts to the situation of women:

"When I was canvassing, a large number, and I don't mean one, two, ten, or twenty people, a large number of people said to me that they would be inclined to support the BLP if BM was leading it. Perhaps because she is seen as a very hard no-nonsense type of person and that is the sort of leadership that we are accustomed to in [the late] Errol Barrow and Tom Adams. And perhaps we have not seen it in either B.St.J or ES. But men are into a lot of ego trips and things, and I see ES doing it all the time. Women have completely different priorities in terms of issues, and in terms of expenditures. Perhaps the country needs a female prime minister. I don't know if they are ready, but I think they need for more females in leadership roles. we can start with a female prime minister."

Many women also think that women will do "a much better job than a lot of men in parliament. Their style is different. Their priorities are different, and their egos are smaller -- or so this female politician argues. Politics, in her view, is the management of the domestic economy. Women are the domestic politicians, and should be the national

ones too:

"It is women who have to administer the economy. I don't care what they do up at the Central Bank or up in the ministry of finance. On a day to day basis, in the household, on a Friday evening, in the supermarket, if you want a graphic example of it, the majority of these people are women. And often when you see a man and a woman together in the supermarket shopping, guess who is the one pulling out the money? It doesn't necessarily mean it is all her money, I have no doubt that a man would have contributed to that. He trust her to manage the economy of that household."

Men trust women to manage; and they do. Furthermore, as was often stated, "women own the majority of houses that are being built in Barbados". This same female politician praised women's work, and lamented the lack of progress:

"When I was a child, all the nurses were women. Three quarters of the teachers were women. All the hawkers in the market were women, except for the fishermen, for wholesale and retail at the beachhead. And those people in the country who have land, small farmers, they wholesaled and retailed at the farm gate as well. And a lot of those were women. Women owned property. All of this is when I was 10 and 12 years old. Considering that this is where women were at in the 1950s, in Barbados, I don't think we have made nearly enough progress in 40 years, compared to where we're at now."

Women administer the economy by virtue of the fact that they administer the household economy, a reflection of the larger sphere. And whatever changes take place at the Central Bank or at the ministry of finance, it is the collective behaviour of the individual households that becomes the determining factor of the success of those changes. It is the response of these households that help to determine market prices, at every level. So women do play a critical role in managing the economy. And maybe this also supports the need for women to be much better placed in the decision-making process. Their input should be critical to the success of the economy because they are active and vital

participants. And they know how to manipulate their economic priorities in order to make the household function efficiently and effectively.

*"I don't think we have made nearly enough progress in 40 years, compared to where we're at now."* The point here being that women's role in the economy has for some time, gone unrecognized. For the most part, most of these economic activities that women performed and still do today, are not generally factored into economic activity in the formal sense, perhaps because it is often difficult to measure, and monitor. Thus, it has been allowed to go unrecognized and so, women's role in the production process is not valued in terms of its GNP contributions. This woman substantiates her point in terms of delayed progress and explains:

"The majority of the nurses are still women, the majority of teachers are still women, the majority of hawkers in the market are still women. But if you looked around now, look at those small businesses in Swan Street, and in Roebuck Street, and so on, many of them are run by women, but not owned by women. But it's not nearly enough when you consider that there's forty years or fifty years of experience in the marketplace. And a lot of them have not been able to develop small business sense or small businesses."

Women form the majority in these activities and in addition to this over-representation, they have moved into many other areas as well. They are playing a much more significant role in the society, and more specifically, in the economy. But this woman is emphasizing the point that given the role that women have played over the years [and she considers only the past half century], they have not reached a point which properly reflects their contribution, their experience nor their capacity. She intimates that officially, men make the decisions at the Central Bank and at the ministry of finance, but it is women who get down to the basics of making things happen. They produce locally

for the market demands, they wholesale and retail, they invest, and they train: they often have their young daughters accompany them in the marketplace learning the skills on the job. They seem to have their own informal structure, administering their own microcosm. This female politician calls for recognition of the role of women in the development process and the need to integrate them at the decision-making level which will perhaps benefit from their 50 or so years of accumulated experience in administering small businesses and households.

## **Conclusion**

The political profession in Barbados has moved on to new dimensions and has radically been transformed during the last half century, however, not along gender lines. People in active politics today, are far younger than politicians of the past, and they cover the two extremes in the age range, from the mid-twenties to the early sixties. In addition to this, it brings women to the forefront of the political arena, giving them a much more participatory image: in the pre-independence period, very few women contested general elections in Barbados and only one held a ministerial position. As a matter of fact, female participation seldom reached the level of elected politics, and consequently submerged the role of women in the political process. The presence of women in the profession is still minimal despite the fact that women were politically enfranchised for at least the past 50 years. The transformation that has taken place relates specifically to racial and class lines but ideologically, it has virtually remained the same.

Women's role in the political process has been slow. Between 1951 and 1991 there was a total of only 26 women who contested general elections of whom, the largest number (11, or 12%) contested the 1991 general elections, with the majority (6) of them emerging on the platform of a new party. This made no impact on the number of women elected, as the entire party was unsuccessful. Women in Barbadian politics play an important role at the grassroots level, and hold various decision-making positions at the constituency branch level. However, there is very little female presence at the executive level, if indeed there is any at all. This amounts to a certain level of ambivalence towards women in the political parties, which is intensified at the electoral level, where women do not seem to make an impact. Much of this seems to hinge on the reticence of the female politician who seems conflicted with the struggle of demonstrating competence, ability, intelligence, and political prowess, and at the same time, being a "lady". Historically, these characteristics have conflicted with being a "lady", particularly in Barbadian terms. So that when a woman enters the political arena competitively, she is placed in a most contradictory role. A role that offers no contradictions for men. Whatever the man does, however he behaves, he remains the gentleman, the politician. In Barbados, there is still a synonymous relationship between the politician and the man.

Women who have had some success in politics in Barbados have grown up in a political family and it is perhaps this early introduction to politics and observing the players that have made the difference. Women make up about 53% of the Barbadian electorate yet in terms of representation at the political level, they are minimal. Of a total of 28 seats contested in the 1991 general elections women were represented in the three



political parties, the DLP, the BLP, and the NDP by 7%; 11%; and 21%, respectively and even in spite of these small numbers, only 4% female representation was elected for the House of Assembly, or in other words, one woman. It is widely acknowledged by both women and men, that a greater effort is required for women to break down the political barriers that they face. And they cannot do it all by themselves. They need the support and assistance of the men in parliament. They need to promote women's issues at the national level and convince the public by educating them that women must play a vital role in the process of promoting gender equality. Short of revolutionary methods, women are not in a position to effect the changes needed for political success. Certainly, they have a role to play but the major decision-makers would have to become seriously involved. Women are often seen as tokens in politics. Perhaps if a certain level of representation in all spheres of society was earmarked for women, (as is done in other countries) it would facilitate the change process.

Women form an integral part of the political machinery in the country but in a way that works very much to further the advancement of men. Their political involvement at the grassroots level can be characterized as enigmatic in the political landscape, and therefore their absence from the national political forefront seems understandable. But this is misguided involvement of women. They, to a large degree, propel men into successful political careers. Why then do women work for the political advancement of men and not that of women? Because of socialization, perhaps. Politics over the years had been perceived by society to a great extent, as a male endeavour. And any women who became involved, certainly brought commitment and dedication to the advancement of the men. But now, this attitude is slowly changing. Women are now pursuing a political career like their male colleagues and they are building up the same type of dynamic, impressive political profile as the most influential of the men.

## **CHAPTER 10**

### **Summary and Conclusions**

The study discusses and compares the roles of women and men in the professional labour market in Barbados. Focusing on commerce, the civil service, university teaching, medicine, law and politics, women's experiences were compared with those of men and were shown to be vastly dissimilar. Furthermore, while women seem to understand men's experiences, men generally seem to misunderstand women's. The study analyzes the nature of the differences in experience between women and men, and provides explanations that can be offered for them.

The present situation of women was largely created through social and economic change which was initiated in Barbados at the beginning of the 1960s: the shift from an agrarian to tourism and industry based economy (1960), the introduction of free secondary education (1962), free university training (1963), independence in 1966 and the Women's Liberation Movement.

The study investigates how these changes affect the roles of women and men with regard to career choice, distribution, mobility, aspirations, job satisfaction, family life, and the vertical structuring of jobs. It is important to determine if there is a difference in the way males and females make their career choices, and once those choices are made, do the two genders enjoy their careers equally? What are the sources of that enjoyment? Are women as upwardly mobile as men, if not, what is the nature of those differences? Does the increasing participation of women in the professions have an

impact on men? and if so, what is the nature of that impact and how do men react? Do they welcome the women or do they oppose the change? Additionally, the study sought to establish if there is sex discrimination against women in their new milieu in terms of treatment, expectations or performance. Do women experience sexual harassment and if so, how do they deal with it? It was also necessary to determine if the working lives of women are different from the working lives of men in the same professions? Are women being fully integrated into the professions, and is the inclusion of women changing the structure of the professions? is work being segregated as a consequence of female participation?

The dependency approach of the Core/Periphery Theory, provided the framework for the study. This approach which addresses the relationship between and within developed and developing societies is the context in which the relationship between women and men is analyzed in the study. In the dependency approach, this relationship is analyzed in terms of social, cultural, political and economic structures. It contends that the development of one society or segment thereof is linked to the underdevelopment of another (Fagerlind and Saha, 1979).

Women in Barbadian society have made rapid progress during the past three decades, and compete with men for job opportunities right across the spectrum of the labour market acquiring varying degrees of success. But despite this change, the relationship between women and men remains unequal. Nevertheless, the dependency approach, while it is appropriate for analyzing the relationship that exists between women and men in the professional labour market, it fails to explain the progress that women

are making, particularly as it seems to threaten the very position of men. hook's (1984) *Feminist Theory from margin to center* further clarifies the unequal relationship between women and men in Barbados but does not go beyond that relationship to reflect the new role of women. As a population, women are more empowered: they are more educated, they participate in the major professions (making up 25% of the professional labour force) they earn high salaries, own homes, and cars, they head households, and often control the domestic economy. This empowerment is not reflected in theories that have been developed to analyze women's role in society. An appropriate theory must take women beyond the position of subordination and dependency status, by recognizing their increasing empowerment -- perhaps a theory of empowerment is needed.

## **Findings**

It is evident from the data that in spite of the efforts made by government and various agencies to promote gender equality, there remains among the general population and the sample studied, an attitude towards women that projects a sense of inherent inequality of the two genders. An attitude which is casually demonstrated but which is forceful enough to reinforce gender differences in society.

There are nine major conclusions which the study revealed: (1) disciplines in the professions are becoming gendered; (2) career and family have differential effects on women and men; (3) women experience sex discrimination and (4) sexual harassment; (5) and hostility from males and females; (6) job satisfaction is defined and measured differentially based on gender; (7) upward mobility is gender-biased; (8) women have

limited access to the professions studied; and (9) the pioneer status of women in the professions impede their career development.

## **Conclusions**

### **Gendered Disciplines**

*There is an emergence of gendered disciplines due to aspects of work within the professions being defined as appropriate for females.* As women move into the historically male professions, gender dichotomies are surfacing which limit women to the margins of certain professions. This gendering of the disciplines guarantees men their dominant position in the core of the professional labour market and controls women's influence as they gain access. In commerce, the majority of women in management have reached the middle management level. Men still hold the top positions in large corporations such as banks, insurance companies, textile industries, and the wholesale and retail industries.

Clearly, women have indeed made rapid progress in moving away from the margins of society in terms of labour force participation, but they have only reached the margins of the professions, generally. The real struggle is in moving away from the margins to the core or center where the real activity takes place. There is a great deal of male ambivalence towards ambitious women who are seeking such change, but this change is also subject to the choices women make in terms of career aspirations. In medicine, women are particularly vulnerable. They often select their discipline based on

certain criteria with family life playing a major role. Those women with young families settle in specializations where they can work regular hours and the demands are not too severe, so that areas like surgery and medicine remain male dominated.

In law, men are the veterans in almost all areas of the profession but in response to the increasing number of women, they seem eager to abandon certain areas such as family law, and other civil matters, leaving them exclusively for women, while they dominate the criminal court and other high profile areas.

A similar situation exists in university teaching. Men dominate the committees and most of the high profile positions both in the academic and administrative tracks. Women on the other hand, seem to have only token representation on committees, where it was often found that the same woman was on several committees thereby limiting the involvement of women. The dichotomies in the civil service and politics speak for themselves. Women, though trained and qualified for very senior positions find that men already occupy them and that a waiting period generally ensues, so that the top of the hierarchy remains predominantly male. In politics, men are perceived to be the real politicians and they occupy all (except for one) of the seats in the House of Assembly. They also receive the political appointments particularly the most senior postings in embassies abroad. Therefore, the dichotomies that surface are relevant to a sexual division of positions of power, which men still monopolize.

## Career and Family and the Self-styled Ceiling

*Gaining access to the professions is a big accomplishment for women but the structure of the professions and the society in general, limits the utilization of that access for a substantial number of women.* For generations, females have struggled to penetrate the glass ceiling in the occupational hierarchy imposed by males which usually limited their aspirations and controlled the career growth they could accomplish. In the major professions, such as those examined in this study, the glass ceiling was even more difficult to overcome and in addition to this ceiling, females were further restricted by glass walls and male values. In more recent times, and perhaps in response to collective international pressure, access to the professions became more widespread and the glass ceiling, a bit flexible. However, women have discovered that access was only one hurdle and that in these previously male-dominated professions, they now find themselves having to impose their own self-defined ceilings on their career. This is due largely to the fact that for women, the compatibility of career and family is extremely difficult because of the rigid structure of the professions.

Some professions like university teaching, are more accommodating than others, where the structure and flexible work schedule more readily facilitate the double load of family and career, than does the medical profession. But even university teaching has its own demands in terms of acquiring the right credentials for promotion: a strong publishing record, good teaching profile, and community service, all of which are very time consuming and difficult for women to achieve while raising a young family. The price women have to pay to compete equally is very high, because generally, they also

have the job of raising the family. They devise many strategies to cope with the situation which vary according to the individual's priorities. The female university dean postponed raising a family for five years in order to advance her career. She complains of having to operate on four and a half hours' sleep in order to keep up with the demands of the profession, particularly publishing, and stated that "... when the kids are in bed and everything is done, I am ready for bed too, but I have to write. And I'm always scrambling out of bed in the morning trying to get the kids ready..." Another lecturer decided not to marry and have a family, giving her priority to her career.

A university male senior lecturer is the one male who experienced career and family similar to the way women do and states that "... my family life has affected my career more than it affected my wife's...". And he projects an inverse situation when he states that "...she didn't seem to have to put aside as much of her professional life or at least she did not do it, as much as I might have done...". But another male felt that his career denied him the true experience of fatherhood "...This job never allowed me to do it ... I wasn't really, in my view, a good father. I was a good provider, but I wasn't a good father ... I regret that very much." Although most women experienced the dilemma of career and family, it was more acute in the medical profession where women impose a self-styled career ceiling in order to cope with the double load.

### **The Self-Styled Ceiling**

Female doctors spoke profusely about the conditions under which they cope in the profession. Waiting "ad infinitum" to marry was the expression used by one psychiatric



consultant who fears she has forfeited the opportunity to have children. Another delayed children for ten years after marriage, to advance professionally, while another decided to forego marriage and children altogether. Female doctors who merge family and career generally impose a self-styled ceiling on their career in order to carry the double load. Those who did not impose a ceiling admitted to a failure in their marriage. In every situation however, there are hard choices women have to make, each having costs to varying degrees, a situation, which men do not experience nor do not seem to fully understand.

The conflict women encounter with career and family develops primarily from systemic discrimination against them and the role they are expected to play in the home. Most women stated quite vehemently that in spite of the professional demands, the bulk of the domestic responsibilities still "land in their lap" and they talked about experiencing "extreme fatigue". Generally, male spouses are playing an increasing role in the home but in terms of responsibility, women carry the burden and spouses give assistance. And when this assistance is broken down and tabulated, it amounts to only a few hours a week, and often includes chores that are not very demanding. Men seem to agree as the politician admitted "...I'm sure if you asked my wife she would tell you 'for what he does he could go to the moon twice a week'. .". In justifying their level of participation, men address this problem by pointing to hired help, and new technologies that facilitate the execution of domestic chores. But the issue remains the onus of the responsibility. When hired help was not available, and when technologies fail to function, the responsibility reverts back to the woman. But more profoundly, since hired help is

generally provided by a female it becomes a powerful socializing agent for children, girls and boys, to associate women, and not men, with household work, thereby perpetuating the gender bias in the domestic division of labour.

### **Sex Discrimination**

*Except for medicine, women experienced sex discrimination on various levels, in the professions studied.* Most men contended there was no sex discrimination while some identified its presence. In commerce, women and men experienced different lives - not totally different, but notably different. Salary discrimination and promotional discrimination were common experiences of a large number of women who argued that their promotions were dictated by male managers' assessments of whether they wished to have more children, that it took them 14 years to move up one level while men were given early promotions, that they had to work "three times as hard", they had to be more competent, and often more qualified to receive the same rewards and make the same decisions as men, some of whom they felt were less competent, less qualified and often less productive. In all-male fields like engineering females were unwelcome, and they were denied information required to get the job done, they received salary increases and promotion in small increments while men were given "big jumps". There were also differential perks for males and females in commerce and in the civil service. Women also discovered that in management, women too, could "get nasty" with a female boss.

In the legal profession, sex discrimination against women was in the distribution of work, differential fees, and the public's preference for a male lawyer. The increasing

number of women entering the profession was responsible for the emerging dichotomy along gender lines, between those in private practice and salaried employees: Males dominated and controlled private practice whereas females generally became salaried employees. In acknowledging this situation, men stated that "It is very difficult for women to start a private practice unless they are known already in some capacity or they are attached to a lawyer in some way...". Women usually operated out of chambers established by males, and to date, there are none established by females. The same holds true for the medical profession where men dominate the private practice of medicine, while women are generally employees of one of the medical institutions.

The political profession presented more difficult problems for women. Though women had been participating in elected politics for more than four decades, they felt discriminated against both at the party level and at the national level: they are often excluded from the parties' top executive bodies and in general elections, they are overlooked by the electorate in favour of men. The study reveals that in this situation, women in politics are discriminated against not only by men, but more so by women who make up 53% of the electorate. There are also differential behaviours for women and men, based on sex discrimination, which favour men and serve to keep women out of the House of Assembly and elected politics. These behaviours revolve around campaigning style which may include for men, frequenting bars and chatting and drinking with potential supporters. Such behaviours are generally not acceptable, if engaged in by the female politician.

## Sexual Harassment

*Women felt sexually harassed in some professions. It was subtle in some professions and appeared non-existent in others, but in the legal profession and in politics it was overt.* Female lawyers contend that sexual harassment impedes their career development, and was responsible for the departure of very talented women from private practice. Women's sexuality became the basis on which they were assessed and they felt their male colleagues saw them "first as women and then as lawyers". One example was the female magistrate who was "complimented" on her femininity by a male defence lawyer, "... you look charming today ma'am..."; and others felt that their success in the profession hinged largely on their compliance with sexual advances from their male colleagues.

Sexual harassment poses a serious problem for women due to the fact that much of their success in the profession is determined by men, who still dominate in virtually all areas: they have the established chambers, they control the private practice of law, receive all the judgeships, and they determine to a large degree, how cases and other legal work are distributed. In addition to this, new graduates who want to affiliate with established firms generally work in a junior capacity, with the senior male determining work assigned and fees paid.

In politics, women felt sexually harassed by their colleagues and by potential supporters, on the political platform and the campaign trail, respectively. Males and females speak of the harassment women usually experience on the platform and this female politician explains that "... I'm sure there were a good few women who said

'look, if that's their attitude, there's no way that I'm going to run'." Males do not deny the harassment as this man explains "...It is just that the nature of the campaigning when it gets bitter and hostile, women have their own dignity to protect ..."; or as another man points out " ... I believe they fear having people refer to their sexuality in pejorative ways, and in demeaning nasty ways. Because in Barbados, the campaigning is quite nasty and personal." Not all men agree: "...some remarks I made in Bridgetown were construed to be an attack on womanhood...and that this is why women don't enter politics ... It has been no kinder to me than it should be to them..."

On the campaign trail, the harassment was also present. Women were hugged, and touched, and received "compliments" about their anatomy. Demanding respect from male voters while soliciting their support was a very difficult task. This put women at a further disadvantage as these two locations (the platform and door-to-door canvassing) are where politicians make their most effective impression on the electorate. Consequently, women always have to instill in the minds of the electorate that they are equally capable politicians committed to doing the people's business in the House of Assembly even though only men had done it previously. In politics, like in the other professions, women were seen first as women and afterwards as professionals, perhaps.

### **Male and Female Hostility**

*Most women in all the professions experienced male hostility but some also experienced female hostility with both situations being more frequent in commerce. In commerce men challenged women's competence and devised strategies to "make them*

cry", to get them out of traditionally all-male jobs such as engineering, and to "destroy" them, while some female subordinates became a little "bitchy" with female bosses. Women in management discovered that some of the "worst daggers" came from other women. Among the strategies men devised to make women fail, include their refusal to interact with their female assistants: "... if he wants information that I have he goes to the accountant who is a male...", said one female assistant director; or they deny critical information needed to do the job, as in the case of the engineer "they will tell you they didn't know you needed it, or they thought you knew it was there, or they didn't think you were ready for it...". And in the publishing industry, the personnel manager's male subordinates had plans to get rid of her.

Women in the civil service also experienced male hostility. One man even accused them of wanting "to indicate that they have a penis" while another man characterized women's associations as being run by small groups of women who were either lesbians, frustrated single women or divorcees. Other women experienced male intimidation on the job. One personnel manager stated that "...the first thing they would do when they come in the office is roll up their sleeves, as if to scare me...". In medicine, men did not accept that female co-workers sometimes had to take care of their own sick children; and a male intern was incensed that a female colleague and new mother, was allowed to work the day shift to cope with her new responsibilities as a mother, "...There shouldn't be any specific hours just because you have a child...", he explained. And another male doctor told his female subordinate when her son was ill "... well really and truly, I'm not interested in your problems..."

Nevertheless, not all males are hostile towards women. In a number of areas men acknowledged an understanding of, and accommodate, the routine domestic chores and childrearing responsibilities women perform. One director of a newspaper publishing company facilitated the maternal responsibilities of a female managing editor by allowing her son to stay in the office when she worked late in the evening. This alleviated some of the problems she experienced with babysitting arrangements, and it assured her that his homework was being done. This kind of corporate accommodation is fast becoming part of a new culture for parents, particularly mothers, who often pick up their children from school between 2:30 and 3:00 in the afternoon and take them to the office where home work assignments are regularly done, while the parent completes the work day. The male bias is also changing in the home environment where boys were favoured over girls for educational and career opportunities. One female doctor spoke of her brother's role in her career choice when he encouraged her to become a doctor and not a nurse, as she had planned. She is now a consultant in psychiatry.

### **Job Satisfaction**

*Job satisfaction for women and men was derived from a variety of sources according to gender. It was also defined and measured differently as well.* In the university for instance, women pointed to their effectiveness and students' participation while some men identified scholarly work and good teaching, and others, flexibility and freedom as their sources of job satisfaction. In medicine, women identified the area of specialization and the effectiveness of patients' treatment. Selecting the specialization was

of paramount importance to women who spoke of moving through a variety of disciplines to find the one they enjoyed most. Even among the women, their preferences differed, selecting or rejecting the same disciplines for different reasons: Some women found surgery exciting while others found it stressful, and pediatrics was turned down because of the fragility of young babies while it was chosen by others who disliked heart attacks, strokes and senility -- medical problems generally associated with adults. Public health was chosen by some because the regular hours and work schedule were more compatible with family life. Men (except for the dentist) were notably less specific in identifying their sources of enjoyment. They generally seem to choose their discipline, and remain with it, but they were vague in explaining that choice. In terms of enjoyment, one man indicated "it is my life".

Women in commerce and the civil service enjoy their jobs but feel that much of the enjoyment comes from rewards received for their educational investment and personal development. Males in these two professions enjoy the success they found and the career possibilities they offer. Women in law and politics enjoy their careers but contend that their satisfaction is often tempered by the maleness of the two professions and the concomitant problems. In both, the public favours males and as a result females feel they have to work much harder than their male colleagues to accomplish the same level of success.



## Upward Mobility

*The patterns of upward mobility for female and male professionals are quite dissimilar even though there is more egalitarianism in the professional labour force.*

In some banks for instance, males progress more rapidly up the corporate ladder than do females. Males are quickly identified for management training programs while their female colleagues remain in clerical positions for extended periods of time. But women go on to educate themselves by attending night school and university to upgrade their education and acquire more skills.

In the legal profession women felt marginalized by virtue of the operations of the old boys' network through which work is distributed in private practice. As a counter strategy, women are taking away a portion of that private work by becoming in-house legal counsels in large corporations. Both women and men concede that differential fees are also gender biased since junior males receive much higher fees than junior females from their male superiors.

A pattern of work segregation is emerging as certain aspects of work are being defined for females and others for males; men are becoming more selective in civil cases and they dominate criminal court, but contend that women are more suited to civil cases such as family law and conveyancing. They cite the rigours of criminal court as a deterrent to women but women disagree and argue instead that criminal court attracts only certain individuals - male or female, who want to specialize in that area of work. One female criminal lawyer even went as far as to say that she enjoys criminal court to the point where she gets a "charge" from it. In the public sector, women are faring much

better. They have moved up the ladder and occupy the positions of chief magistrate and registrar of the courts.

In university teaching women experience promotional discrimination, generally. But men deny this stating that "You do your work and chances are that you will get promoted based on your work..." Women point out that moving from one level, such as lecturer to senior lecturer, takes women approximately 14 years but note that "... the chaps get on better as far as promotions are concerned...", that they are promoted more frequently, they are asked to apply for promotion, or are just simply promoted. Women have made some progress in the administrative track: one woman is a dean of her faculty and another is the head of her department. Nevertheless, women contend that men still dominate in this area as well and state that "all the PVCs are men" and that there are no women Chairs. The disproportionate number of men to women on faculty and in administration results in a skewed distribution of positions in both areas that largely favours males.

The civil service is the most equitable in the distribution of opportunities although evidence of discrimination against women was indicated. However, qualification and method of promotion are more clearly defined. Women have reached as high as permanent secretary in the structure, though only in a token sense. Since men were in the system longer, and with sex discrimination still evident, men dominate the positions of power and prestige. It is readily understood that at this level, women's promotion is predicated upon the availability of positions brought about by the retirement or transfer of males already in these limited top positions, and as the senior female civil servant

points out "... if you need 20 permanent secretaries, they are already there ...". In terms of ambassadorial postings, women have not been very fortunate either. At the time of conducting the research for this study, there was only one female heading an embassy abroad.

The medical profession presents different dynamics. Male and female doctors attested to the existence of equality of promotional opportunity in the system. However, many female doctors are not able to obtain additional credentials required for upward mobility due to problems associated with having to travel abroad to complete further studies, particularly if they are raising young children. Those women who do acquire the credentials contend that "...once you are qualified and you are next in line, you get the promotion, whether you are a man or a woman...".

Women in the commercial sector were noticeably upwardly mobile but they claim much of it came from having to work "three times as hard" as their male colleagues who have not fully accepted their participation and are often unfriendly and hostile towards women. Male strategies are planned to exclude women from board meetings, limiting their presence to their presentation of a report. When they are allowed to participate, men devise plans to ridicule them.

### **Career Choices/Aspirations**

*There are systematic differences in the effect socialization has on males and females in the way they participate in the professional labour market.* The study indicates that women and men make their career choices differently and that women's

career aspirations are shaped by their family life situation and/or expectations. These are factors that do not seem to affect men.

Women in the upper age range of the sample were driven by limited career options which often excluded the major professions. Those women who were persistent or who got around the barriers, were either very bright, or came from very influential families. Women from the middle to lower levels of the age spectrum, spoke very differently in terms of choices for a number of reasons: gender equality was being promoted through educational reform; increased options reflected the need for a more diversified workforce, hence the move to include the 50% of the population historically excluded, and finally the country's involvement in the universal umbrella committed to eliminating gender inequality in society.

In spite of the new opportunities women have acquired, some women and men expressed concern that women cannot fully participate in some professions due to structural discrepancies that deny them the same privileges that men enjoy. Nevertheless, women are able to work around these discrepancies effectively, but argue that they allow for the gendering of some disciplines, thereby creating a dichotomy where men remain at the center and women on the margins (hooks, 1984).

### **Women Pioneers in the Professions**

*The final conclusion of the study is that the pioneer status of women in the professions impedes their career development.* Many of the women interviewed are still first generation women at their level in their profession and sometimes even the first

generation women in the specific professions. This makes for a more stressful situation for them but they see themselves as role models, paving the way for other women, who will perhaps have a less difficult experience than their predecessors.

In commerce one personnel manager commented that "... when I came into this organization in 1982 ...there were no females at all at any level of seniority ... I think I sort of pioneered the change". So too did the general secretary of the YMCA "I was the first female general secretary in the YMCA in the world...", and the engineer was the first Barbadian to work in engineering in Barbados and the first Barbadian to graduate in engineering from the University of the West Indies.

The most senior female politician and successful lawyer pointed out that "In those years, I was the only woman at the private bar ...", assuming the "only woman" status Kanter (1977) confers on such women to emphasize their numerical disadvantage.

The same situation was echoed in the medical profession as well where the pediatrics consultant in private practice indicated that "...Of course I suppose it was a little bit peculiar too, because I was the first Barbadian female consultant appointed to a position, which obviously, had always been held by men....". And the list goes on.

The police inspector noted that "... I was the first woman station sergeant who went on to be in charge of a police station, which normally always had a man." And in the courts? The chief registrar realized that "I have been aware that people have come in and see me in here and are surprised it's a woman..."

At Cave Hill Campus, the female dean noted that "...I was also the first member to have a Ph.D.... I was also the first person in the department to write a book...." And

in politics, the only female MP was also vice-president of her party for over 15 years and "no other woman has made it..."

Finally, perhaps, the most important finding of all is that women are successfully moving into the hitherto male-dominated bastions of the professions, they are training in management and out-performing males in the schools and often in jobs, they are starting small businesses, and are upwardly mobile in larger ones, they are successful, they are satisfied, they are developing strategies to cope with occasional to frequent (depending on the profession) male hostility and the double load. They might have to work "three times as hard", might have to be "more competent", and put in that "extra something" to achieve equally with men, but times, in their view, are changing for the better.

## **Bibliography**

- Adams, Owen. 1988. "Divorce Rates in Canada" in *Canadian Social Trends*, Winter. Statistics Canada.
- Allen et al. 1971. *Women in Top Jobs. Four Studies in Achievement*. The Alden Press, Oxford, England.
- Armstrong, Pat, and Hugh Armstrong. 1990. *Theorizing Women's Work*. Garamond Press, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
- Armstrong, Pat and Hugh Armstrong. 1984. *The Double Ghetto Canadian Women and Their Segregated Work*. McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, Ontario.
- Barrett, Michele. 1980. *Women's Oppression Today: Problems in Marxist Feminist Analysis*. London.
- Barrow, Christine. 1986. "Male Images of Women in Barbados". *Social and economic Studies*, Volume 35, No. 3. pp 51-63.
- Bassi, Laurie J. 1988. "Poverty Among Women and Children: What Accounts for the Change?" in *American Economic Review*, Vol 78 No. 2, May.
- Beckles, Hilary, McD. 1989. *Natural Rebels A social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados* Zed Books Ltd., London.
- Beckles, Hilary, McD. 1989. *Corporate Power in Barbados The Mutual Affair Economic Injustice in A Political Democracy*, Lighthouse Communications, Bridgetown, Barbados.
- Beechey, Veronica, 1978. "Women and production: a critical analysis of some sociological theories of women's work" in Annette Kuhn and AnnMarie Wolpe, eds. *Feminism and Materialism*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.
- Beller, Andrea H. and John W. Graham. 1988. The Feminization of Poverty. "Child Support Payments: Evidence from Repeated Cross Sections" in *American Economic Review* Vol 78 No.2, May.
- Bielby, W. T., & Baron, J. N. 1986. Men and women at work: sex segregation and statistical discrimination. *American Journal of Sociology*. 91 (4).
- Blau, Francine. 1984. "Occupational Segregation and Labour Market Discrimination". Barbara F. Reskin, Ed. *Sex Segregation in the Workplace*. National Academy Press, Washington, D.C.

- Blau, Francine D. and Carol L. Jusenius. 1977. "Sex Segregation in the Labor Market in Nona Glazer-Mabler and Helen Youngelson Waehrer, eds. *Woman in a Man-Made World A socioeconomic Handbook*. Rand McNally College Publishing Company, Chicago. pp. 194-207.
- Blau, Francine D., and Marianne A. Ferber. 1986. *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work*. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, U.S.A.
- Blum, Linda and Vicki Smith. 1988. "Women's Mobility in the Corporation: A Critique of the Politics of Optimism.", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. Vol. 13, No. 31. pp. 528-545.
- Borcelle, G. 1985. *Jobs for Women A plea for equality of opportunity*. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris.
- Boserup, E. 1970. *Woman's Role in Economic Development*. St. Martin's Press, New York.
- Braverman, Harry. 1974. *Labour and Monopoly Capital The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century*. Monthly Press Review, London, England.
- Browne, Phyllis, 1993. "Gender and University Teaching: the case of Barbados". Unpublished paper presented at the Summer Seminar Series, Bishop's University, Lennoxville, Quebec.
- Browne, Phyllis. 1989. "Gender and Occupation in Barbados". Unpublished Paper presented at the International Colloquium on *Gender and Class Empirical and Theoretical Developments*, held at the University of Antwerp, Belgium.
- Browne, Phyllis. 1986. *Educational Reforms in Barbados 1966-1986: Social Implications*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec.
- Bryson, Valerie. 1992. *Feminist Political Theory An Introduction*. Paragon House, New York.
- Carchedi, G. 1977. *On The Economic identification of Social Classes*. Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. London.
- Cartey, Linda E. 1988. *The Political Economy of Gender Inequality at the University of the West Indies*. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ont.
- Clogg, Clifford C., Scott R. Eliason and Robert J. Wahl. 1990. "Labour-Market



Experiences and Labour-Force Outcomes". *American Journal of Sociology*, Volume 95 Number 6, May. pp 1536-76.

- Cockburn, Cynthia. 1988. 'The Gendering of Job: Work Place Relations and the reproduction of Sex Segregation' in Walby, Sylvia ed. *Gender Segregation at Work*. Open University Press, Milton Keynes, Philadelphia.
- Cohn, S. R. 1985. Clerical labour intensity and the feminization of clerical labour in Great Britain, 1857-1947. *Social Forces*. V. 63 (4). 1060-1067.
- Connelly, M. P. & MacDonald, M. 1990. *Women and the labour force*. Supply and Services Canada.
- Crompton, R. & Jones, G. 1984. *White-Collar Proletariat Deskilling and Gender in Clerical Work*. Temple University Press, Philadelphia.
- de Beauvoir, Simone. 1976. *The Second Sex*. Alfred A. Knoff, New York.
- Deutschman, Alan. 1991. "Dealing with Sexual Harassment". *Fortune*, Vol. 124, No. 11, November. pp 145-148.
- Duncan, Neville, and Kenneth O'Brien. 1983. *Women and Politics in Barbados 1948-1981*. Institute of Social and Economic Research (Eastern Caribbean) University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados.
- Eisenstein, Zillah R. ed. 1979. *Capitalist Patriarchy And the Case for Socialist Feminism*. Monthly Review Press, New York.
- Fagerlind, Ingemar and Lawrence J. Saha. 1989. *Education and National Development A Comparative Perspective*. Pergmon Press, Toronto.
- Feldberg, R. L. & Glenn, E. N. 1988. " Male and female: job versus gender models in the sociology of work". *Women and Work Problems and perspectives*, Boston.
- Firth-Cozens Jenny and Micahel A. West. 1991. *Women at Work Psychological and organizational perspectives*. Open University Press, Buckingham.
- Forde, Norma Monica. 1980. *The Status of Women in Barbados what has been done since 1978*. Institute of Social and Economic Research (Eastern Caribbean), Occasional Paper No. 15, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados.
- Fox, Bonnie J. and John Fox. 1986. "Women in the labour market, 1931-1981: exclusion and competition" in *Canadian Review of Sociology & Anthropology* 23 (1).

- Fox, Mary Frank and Sharlene Hesse-Biber. 1984. *Women at Work*. Mayfield Publishing Company, Boston, Massachusetts.
- Freidan, Betty, 1974. *The Feminine Mystique* Dell Publishing Co., Inc., New York.
- Gill, Margaret, and Joycelin Massiah. 1984. *Women, Work and Development*. Institute of Social and Economic Research (Eastern Caribbean), University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados.
- Glenn, E. N. & Feldberg, R. L. 1977. Degraded and deskilled: the proletarianization of clerical work. *Social Problems*. V. 25 (1). 52-64.
- Hantrais, Linda. 1990. *Managing Professional and Family Life A Comparative Study of British and French Women*. Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, Hants, England.
- Hartman, Heidi. 1979. "Capitalism, Patriarchy, and job Segregation by Sex." in Zillah R. Eisenstein ed. *Capitalist Patriarchy and the case for Socialist Feminism*, Monthly Review Press, New York.
- Hartman, Heidi I. 1987. "Changes in Women's Economic and Family Roles in Post-World War II United States." in Lourdes Beneria and Catherine R. Stimpson, eds. *Women, Households, and the Economy*. Rutgers University Press, London.
- Haslett, Beth J., Florence L. Geis and Mae R. Carter. 1992. *The Organizational Woman: Power and Paradox*. Ablex Publishing Corporation, Norwood, New Jersey.
- Heller (ed.), *Structured Social Inequality A Reader in comparative social stratification* (pp. 363-373). The McMillan Company, New York.
- Hill, Anne M. 1980. "Intercohort Differences in Women's Labour Market Transitions", AES Papers and Proceedings, Vol. 80 No. 2, pp 289-291.
- hooks, bell. 1984. *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* South End Press, Boston, MA.
- hooks, bell. 1981. *Ain't I a Woman Black Women and Feminism* South End Press, Boston, MA.
- Honig, Alice Sterling. 1984. "Child Care Options and Decisions: Facts and Figurings for Families" in Kathryn M. Borman, Daisy Quarm, and Sarah Gideonse eds., *Women in the Workplace: Effects on Families*. Ablex Publishing Corporation, New Jersey, U.S.A.

- Humphrey, John. 1987. *Gender and Work in the Third World Sexual Divisions in Brazilian Industry*. Tavistock Publications, New York.
- Johansen, E. 1984. *Comparable Worth The Myth and the Movement*. Westview Press Inc., Colorado, U.S.A.
- Kamerman, Sheila B. 1984. "Women, Children, and Poverty: Public Policies and Female-headed Families in Industrialized Countries.", in Barbara C. Gelpi et al. eds. *Women and Poverty*. The University of Chicago Press. pp. 41-63.
- Josefowitz, Natasha. 1980. *Paths to Power A Woman's Guide From first Job to Top Executive*. Addison-Wesley Publishing, Mas.
- Kanter, Rosabeth Moss 1977a. *Men and Women of the Corporation*. Basic Books, New York.
- Kanter, Rosabeth Moss 1977b. "Some effects of proportions on group life: skewed sex ratios and responses to token women". *American Journal of Sociology*. 82 (5). 965-990.
- Kiberman, Jacon Alex and Arleen Leibowitz. 1990. "Women's Labour Market Mobility: Evidence from the NLS "Child Care and Women's Return to Work After Childbirth". *American Economic Review* Vol. 80 No. 2, May.
- Kuhn, Annette and AnnMarie Wolpe. 1978. *Feminism and Materialism Women and Modes of Production*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.
- Kuhn, Annette, 1978. "Structures of patriarchy and capital in the family in Annette Kuhn and AnnMarie Wolpe *Feminism and Materialism Women and Modes of Production*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.
- Lerner, Gerda. 1986. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. Oxford University Press Inc. New York.
- Light, Audrey and Manuelita Ureta. 1990. "Gender Differences in Wages and Job Turnover Among Continuously Employed Workers". *AEA Papers and Proceedings*, Vol. 80 No 2, May. pp 293-297.
- Lipset, S. & M. & Bendix, R. 1969. Psychological factors in social mobility: intelligence and motivation. In C.S.
- Lowe, G. S. (1987). *Women in The Administrative Revolution The feminization of clerical work*. Univesity Toronto Press, Toronto.

- Luxton, Meg. 1980. *More Than A Labour of Love Three Generations of Women's Work In the Home*. Women's Press, Toronto.
- Marshall, Katherine. 1989. "Women in Professional Occupations: Progress in the 1980s". *Canadian Social Trends*, Spring 1989. Statistics Canada.
- Massiah, Joycelin. *Employed Women in Barbados: A Demographic Profile, 1946-1990*. Institute of Social and Economic Research (Eastern Caribbean) Occasional Paper No. 8, University of the West Indies, Cave Hil, Barbados.
- Mitchell, Juliet. 1971. *Women's Estate*. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth.
- Moore, M. 1987. Women in Male-Dominated Professions. *Canadian Social Trends* Winter. Statistics Canada.
- Momsen, Janet Henshall. 1988. "Changing Gender Roles in Caribbean Peasant Agriculture" in John S. Brierley and Hymie Rubenstein, eds. *Small Farming and Peasant Resources in the Caribbean* John S. Brierley and Hymie Rubenstein, eds. Department of Geography, The University of Manitoba Winnipeg, Manitoba. pp 83-100.
- Myrdal, Gunnar. 1989. "The Equality Issue in World Development". *American Economic Review*, Vol. 79, No. 6, December.
- Nelson, Barbara J. 1984. "Women's Poverty and Women's Citizenship: Some Political Consequences of Economic Marginality.", in Barbara C. Gelpi et al. eds. *Women and Poverty*. The University of Chicago Press. pp.
- Nevill, D.D. & Schlecker, D.I. (1988). "The relation of self-efficacy and assertiveness to willingness to engage in traditional/nontraditional career activities". *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 12. 91-98.
- Nieva, Veronica F. and Barbara A. Gutek. 1981. *Women and Work A Psychological Perspective*. Praeger Publishers, N.Y.
- O'Connor, Pat. "Women's Experience of power within marriage: an inexplicable phenomenon?". *The Sociological Review*, Volume 39, No. 4, November. pp 823-842.
- O'Neil, Maureen. 1986. "Forward-Looking Strategies: The UN World Conference on Women" in *Canadian Women Studies/Les Cahiers de la femme* Vol.7, Nos. 1&2, Spring/Summer. York University, Ontario pp. 19-21.

- Ott, E. M. (1989). "Effects of the male-ratio at work policewomen and male nurses". *Psychology of Women Quarterly*. 13. 41-57.
- Patterson Michelle and Laurie Engelberg. 1978. "Women in Male-Dominated Professions in *Women Working Theories and Facts in Perspective*. Mayfield Publishing Company.
- Phillips, Paul, and Erin Phillips. 1983. *Women and Work Inequality in the Labour Market*. James Lorimecompany. Toronto, Canada.
- Population Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean 1980/81*, Barbados., May 1980.
- Population Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean*, Vols. 4, Part 16, & Vol. 6, Part 2, 1970.
- Population Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean*, Vol. 11, 1960.
- Pratt, Leila J., Stephanie A. Smullen and Ben L. Kyer. 1988. "Macroeconomic Impact of Occupational Wage Equality". *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 34, 179-187.
- Psacharopoulos, George, and Woodhall. 1986. *Education for Development An Analysis of Investment Choices*. Oxford University Press, England.
- Peitchinis, S. G. (1989). *Women at Work: Discrimination and Response*. McClelland & Stewart Inc., Toronto.
- Phillips, P. & Phillips, E. (1983). *Women and Work Inequality in the labour market*. James Lorimer & Company, Toronto.
- Pringle, R. (1989). *Secretaries Talk Sexuality, power and work*. Verso, New York.
- Rizzo, Ann-Marie and Carmen Mendez. 1990. *The Integration of Women in Management*. Quorum Books, New York.
- Roberge, R. (1988). "53% des diplomes universitaires aux femmes". *La Presse*, August 3. pp. A1 & A4.
- Report of the National Commission on the Status of Women in Barbados*, Vols. 1 & 2, May 1978.
- Roberts, Joan I. 1976. "Pictures of Power and Powerlessness: A Personal Synthesis.", in Joan I. Roberts, ed., *Beyond Intellectual Sexism. A New Woman a New Reality.*, David McKay Inc., N.Y. pp. 14-60.

- Roos, Patricia A. and Barbara F. Reskin. 1984. "Institutional Factors Contributing to Sex Segregation in the Workplace", in *Sex Segregation in the Work place Trends Explanations, Remedies*. National Academy Press. Washington.
- Rosener, Judy B. 1990. "Ways Women Lead". *Harvard Business Review*, November-December 1990. pp 119-126.
- Safa, Helen I. 1986. "Economic Autonomy and Sexual Equality in Caribbean Society. *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 3. pp 1-21.
- Schwartz, Felice N. 1989. "Management Women and the New Facts of Life" in *Harvard Business Review*, January-February, Number 1 pp 66-76.
- Scott, J. W. 1982. "The mechanization of women's work". *Scientific American*. 247 (3). 156-187.
- Segal, B.E. (1962). "Male Nurses: A case study in status contradiction and prestige loss". *Social Forces* 41. 31-38.
- Smith, Joan. 1984. "The Paradox of Women's Poverty: Wage-earning Women and Economic Transformation.", in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. Vol 10, No. 2. pp. 291-310.
- Staff List*. 1990 *Barbados Public Service*, December.
- Statistics Canada. (1990). *Women in Canada A statistical report*. Supply and Services Canada.
- Stevenson Mary Huff. 1978. "Wage Difference between Men and Women: Economic Theories" in Stromberg Ann H. and Shirley Harkess. *Women Working Theories and Facts in Perspective*. Mayfield Publishing Company, California.
- Stone, Nan. 1989. "Mother's Work". *Harvard Business Review*, September-October, Number 5. pp 50-56.
- Strober, Myra H. 1984. Toward a General Theory of Occupational Sex segregation the Case of public School Teaching in *Sex Segregation in the Workplace Trends, Explanations, Trends, Explanations, Remedies*, National Academy Press, Washington. pp 144-156.
- Stuart, Sheila 1990. "Women In politics". *The New Bajan*. November. p 10.
- Stuart, Sheila. 1990. "The Pioneers". *The New Bajan*, November. pp 11-12.

- Sutherland, Margaret B. 1985. "The Situation of Women Who Teach in Universities: Contrasts and Common Ground.", in *Comparative Education* Vol 21, No. 1 pp. 21-28.
- Unger, Rhoda Kesler. 1985. "Toward a Redefinition of Sex and Gender" in Juanita H. Williams, ed. *Psychology of Women Selected Readings* 2nd ed. W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. New York. pp 132-145.
- University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. *Faculty of Social Sciences Handbook 1991-92*.
- University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. *Faculty of Arts & General Studies Handbook 1991-92*.
- University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. *Faculty of Law Handbook 1990-91*.
- University of the West Indies. *Official Statistics. 1987-88*.
- United Nations Statistical YearBook. 1993. 38th Issue 1990/91, New York.*
- Walby, Sylvia. 1990. *Theorizing Patriarchy*. Basil Blackwell Inc. Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A.
- Walby, S. (1988). (ed.) *Gender Segregation At Work* Open University Press, Milton Keynes, Philadelphia.
- Walby, Sylvia 1986. *Patriarchy at Work*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- Weiner, L. Y. (1985). *From Working Girl to Working Mother The female labour force in the United States, 1820-1980*. The University of North Carolina Press.
- Wente, Margaret, 1990. "Women at the Top A Progress Report". *Report on Business Magazine*, October. pp 56-68.
- Will, Marva. 1972. *Political Development in the Mini-State Caribbean: A Focus on Barbados*. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Missouri, U.S.A.
- Williams, Christine L. 1992. The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in the "Female" Professions". *Social Problems*, Vol. 39, No. 3, August 1992. pp 253-267.
- Witz, Anne. 1988. 'Patriarchal Relations and Patterns of Sex Segregation in the Medical Division of Labour' in Sylvia Walby, ed. *Gender Segregation at Work*. Open University Press, Kilton Keynes, Philadelphia.

- Yoder, J. D. & Sinnett, L. M. (1985). "Is it all in the numbers A case study of tokenism". *Psychology of Women Quarterly*. 9 (3). 413-418.
- Zaretsky, Eli. 1977. "Capitalism, the Family, and Personal Life" in Nona Glazer-Malben and Helen Youngelson Waehrer eds. *Woman in a Man-made world A socioeconomic Handbook*, 2nd ed. Rand McNally College Publishing, Chicago.
- Zimmer, L. (1988). Tokenism and women in the workplace: the limits of gender-neutral theory. *Social Problems* 35. (1). 64-77.



## **Appendix 1**

### **Research Questions**

Six questions formed the focus of the research. These were specifically designed to elicit information relative to the experience of women and men in the major professions and are as follows:

***Question 1. What are the major factors that influence the career choices of men and women and how have these changed in the past 25 years?***

In order to better understand the gender differences in the labour market it is necessary to trace these differences back to the point of making choices, and to question why these particular choices were made. This question aimed at clarifying whether males and females are influenced differently in making their career choice. It also aimed at analyzing the socialization experience in the home and whether girls and boys in the same home received differential socialization and if so, what effect did it have on their career choice. The wide age range of the sample was deliberate in attempting to determine if there was generational change in the way career choices were made and whether the factors of influence had changed along gender lines.

***Question 2. How do upward mobility rates for men and women compare?***

This question was designed to determine if women and men structure their career paths differently, if they redefine their career ambitions over time and whether career opportunities are equally available to women and men in the same professions, once they

are equally qualified. This question was specifically aimed at establishing the experience of women who are still new in many of the major professions, and many of whom are the first generation women in these jobs. The question was also aimed at providing a comparative analysis of the perception each group had of the other and that group's experience in the same work situations, particularly women's experience of discrimination, sexual harassment and male hostilities.

***Question 3. How do new opportunities in the labour market become gender-defined and how does this affect females in the occupational structure?***

In the new professions, new for women that is, gender streams seem to extend the traditional gender differentiated occupational structure: women in family law, men in criminal law, women in family medicine, men in surgery, medicine, ophthalmology, etc. How does this streaming develop? and why? The question also sought to establish how women are affected if this strategy is put in place and how do women see their future when they are well qualified and are confronted with discriminatory barriers that inhibit their full participation.

***Question 4. Are women and men equally satisfied in their jobs?***

This question became very profound in terms of the way in which the subjects in the six professions responded, projecting a very pronounced gender component embedded in it. The basis for this question originated from the labour market opportunities that women now have and the higher levels of study which they are attaining. These two factors become the pivotal point from which women are able to make the transition from the kitchen to the boardroom and in view of the historical dominance of men in the major

professions and in the boardroom, it was felt that this question would elicit information detailing women's experience in their new milieu and allow for a comparison with the experience of men. The question was also aimed at establishing the way in which men and women defined job satisfaction.

***Question 5. Does family life have a differential impact on the career paths of men and women?***

Given the fact that women are now participating in the major professions in large numbers, the question was developed to determine what problems they encounter in pursuing their career, the reaction of men and other women to their career growth, and what are the coping mechanisms they have devised in their individual situations. The question recognizes the traditional role of women in society, and addresses the new role of women in transition as they are increasingly participating in the labour market. The question was also designed to query the domestic division of labour, whether the distribution has changed or redefined, and how decisions are made in terms of raising the family and pursuing demanding careers.

***Question 6. How has the surge of female labour force participation influenced the gender composition of previously male-dominated professions?***

This question recognizes the large number of women in professions from which they were excluded for centuries and its aim was to determine if women's participation is recognized to the extent where the composition of these jobs will change over time, and if the professions will eventually become a gender neutral atmosphere? It was important

to determine if women's increasing labour force participation was such that the gender composition of previously male defined jobs was being influenced to the extent that the concept of tokenism was being discarded. Have we transcended tokenism?